

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
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- ☒ Immediate
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☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

- ☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☒ UNCLAS

Date 8/14/89

1 FM FBI JACKSON (149-JN-NEW)

2 TO DIRECTOR FBI/IMMEDIATE/

3 BT

4 UNCLAS

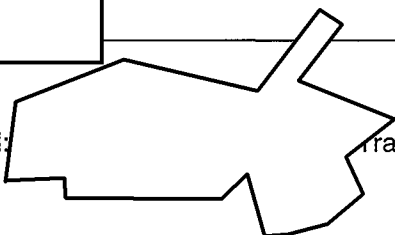
5 CITE: //3320:2842//

6 PASS: CID.

7
 8 SUBJECT: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN
 9 I. SMITH, MEMBER OF CONGRESS, FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, STATE
 10 OF MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 13, 1989.

11 ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 13, 1989, AT APPROXIMATELY 9:05 P.M., U.
 12 S. CONGRESSMAN LARKIN I. SMITH OF MISSISSIPPI, DEPARTED MUNICIPAL
 13 AIRPORT AT HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI, EN ROUTE TO MUNICIPAL
 14 AIRPORT AT GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI, WHICH IS APPROXIMATELY 70 MILES
 15 SOUTH OF HATTIESBURG. CONGRESSMAN SMITH WAS THE ONLY PASSENGER
 16 IN THE CESSNA 177 RG AIRCRAFT WHICH WAS PILOTED BY CHARLES

149A - JN - 17714

Approved: 

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(Number)

0212Z Per
(Time)

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Date _____

1 ^PAGE TWO DE JN 149-JN-NEW UNCLAS
2 "CHUCK" J. VIERLING. THE CESSNA 177 RG AIRCRAFT, DESCRIBED AS A
3 SINGLE-ENGINE, HIGH-WING AIRCRAFT WITH RETRACTABLE LANDING GEAR,
4 HAD BEEN ASSIGNED FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA)
5 REGISTRATION NUMBER N 1976 Q, AND WAS REGISTERED TO THE INSTITUTE
6 OF MARINE MAMMAL STUDIES, INC., P.O. BOX 4078, GULFPORT,
7 MISSISSIPPI, 39502. THE AIRCRAFT WAS BEING OPERATED UNDER VISUAL
8 FLIGHT RULES (VFR) UNDER CONTROL OF THE FLIGHT CENTER AT HOUSTON,
9 TEXAS. APPROXIMATELY 38 OR 39 MILES NORTH OF GULFPORT,
10 MISSISSIPPI, THE AIRCRAFT WAS "HANDED OFF" FROM THE HOUSTON
11 FLIGHT CENTER TO THE FAA CONTROL TOWER AT THE GULFPORT MUNICIPAL
12 AIRPORT.

13 AT 9:25 P.M., THE PILOT CONTACTED THE FAA TOWER AT GULFPORT
14 AND ADVISED HE WAS INBOUND TO GULFPORT AT 3,000 FEET AND
15 REQUESTED LANDING DATA. THE TOWER RESPONDED WITH WEATHER
16 CONDITIONS, WHICH INCLUDED VISIBILITY OF SIX MILES WITH FOG AND
17 HAZE, AS WELL AS REQUIRED RUNWAY INFORMATION. THE PILOT DID NOT
18 ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIVING THE TRANSMITTED DATA FROM THE CONTROL
19 TOWER, AND ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT THE AIRCRAFT THEREAFTER BY THE
20 CONTROL TOWER MET WITH NEGATIVE RESULTS. [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED] IN GULFPORT, ADVISED RADAR

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Date _____

1 ^PAGE THREE DE JN 149-JN-NEW UNCLAS

2 CONTACT WITH THE AIRCRAFT WAS LOST APPROXIMATELY 36 MILES NORTH
3 OF GULFPORT ON A SEVEN DEGREE RADIAL FROM THE GULFPORT TOWER.

4 WITNESSES IN SOUTH PERRY COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, APPROXIMATELY
5 TWENTY MILES NORTHEAST OF WIGGINS, MISSISSIPPI, REPORTED HEARING
6 A LOW-FLYING AIRCRAFT AND SUBSEQUENT CRASH AT APPROXIMATELY THE
7 SAME TIME THE CONTROL TOWER AT GULFPORT LOST RADAR AND RADIO
8 CONTACT. AN EXTENSIVE AIR AND GROUND SEARCH WAS INITIATED, AND
9 AT APPROXIMATELY 7:54 A.M. CENTRAL DAYLIGHT TIME, MONDAY, AUGUST
10 14, THE CRASH SITE WAS LOCATED BY DEPUTIES OPERATING A HARRISON
11 COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT HELICOPTER FROM GULFPORT,
12 MISSISSIPPI.

13 JACKSON DIVISION AGENTS RESPONDED TO THE CRASH SCENE TO
14 SECURE BUREAU INTERESTS AND OFFER APPROPRIATE LABORATORY
15 ASSISTANCE. OBSERVATION AT CRASH SCENE, WHICH IS LOCATED IN A
16 PINE FOREST ON RELATIVELY FLAT LAND, REVEALED NO SURVIVORS, AND
17 BOTH THE AIRCRAFT AND ITS OCCUPANTS WERE BADLY MANGLED. SMITH
18 AND VIERLING DIED ON IMPACT. DOCTOR ROBERT CARTER, FAA, AVIATION
19 MEDICAL EXAMINER, WAS INTERVIEWED AT THE SCENE AND HE STATED
20 CONGRESSMAN SMITH'S WALLET HAD BEEN RECOVERED FROM THE AIRCRAFT,
21 AS WELL AS OTHER IDENTIFICATION BELONGING TO THE PILOT, CHARLES

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Date _____

1 ^PAGE FOUR DE JN 149-JN-NEW UNCLAS

2 J. VIERLING. THEIR REMAINS ARE BEING TRANSPORTED TO GULFPORT,
3 MISSISSIPPI, WHERE A U.S. AIR FORCE BODY RECONSTRUCTION TEAM,
4 INCLUDING A FORENSIC DENTIST, WILL MAKE POSITIVE IDENTIFICATIONS.

5 CONGRESSMAN LARKIN I. SMITH WAS A WHITE MALE BORN JUNE 26,
6 1944, WITH SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER 428-88-6868. HE WAS A
7 GRADUATE OF THE 96TH SESSION OF THE FBI NATIONAL ACADEMY AND WAS
8 ACTIVE IN NA MATTERS. HE SERVED AS SHERIFF OF HARRISON COUNTY,
9 MISSISSIPPI, PRIOR TO BEING ELECTED TO CONGRESS NOVEMBER, 1988.
10 HE WAS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE FBI AND ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT
11 EFFORTS WITHIN THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI. HE RESIDED AT 6170
12 LARKWOOD LANE, LONG BEACH, MISSISSIPPI, 39560 WITH
13

14 PILOT CHARLES "CHUCK" J. VIERLING WAS A WHITE MALE BORN
15 NOVEMBER 25, 1930, WITH SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER 428-50-
16 1025. HE RESIDED AT 200 MCCANDLISS DRIVE, GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI,
17 AND WAS FAA CERTIFIED TO OPERATE LAND BASED SINGLE-ENGINE
18 AIRCRAFT.

19 MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB)
20 WERE REPORTEDLY EN ROUTE TO THE CRASH SCENE AT NOON ON MONDAY,
21 AUGUST 14, 1989.

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Date _____

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2 ^PAGE FIVE DE JN 149-JN-NEW UNCLAS

3 THERE IS NO INDICATION OR ALLEGATION OF SABOTAGE IN THIS
4 MATTER, AND NO SUBSTANTIVE INVESTIGATION IS BEING INITIATED BY
5 THE JACKSON DIVISION REGARDING THE CRASH.

6 BT
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Crash Involving Larkin J. Smith
Member of Congress

(Title)

(File No.)

149-JN-17714-1A

[illegible]

149-JN-17714-1A

AUG 28 1989

FBI - JACKSON

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Field File No. 149-JN-17714-1A1

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To Be Returned ☐ Yes ☐ No Receipt Given ☐ Yes ☐ No

Grand Jury Material - Disseminate Only Pursuant to Rule 6(e), Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure ☐ Yes ☐ No

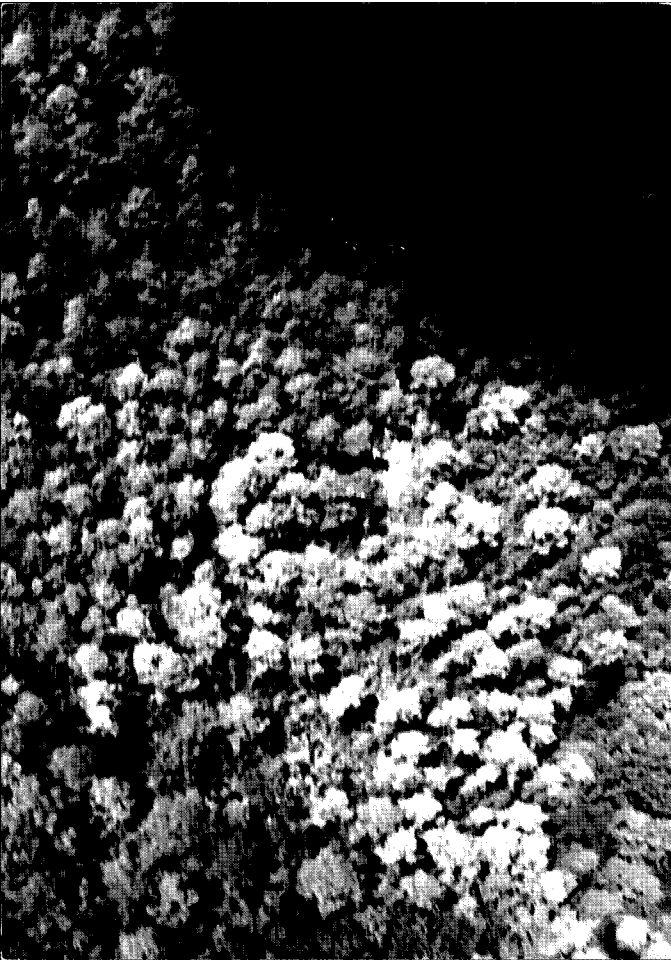
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Member of Congress

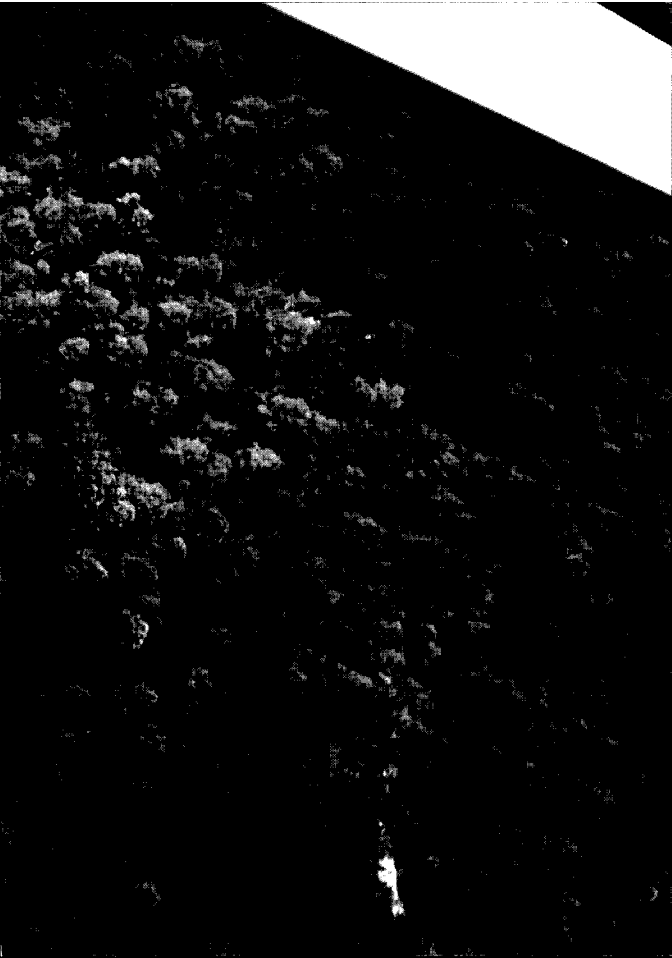
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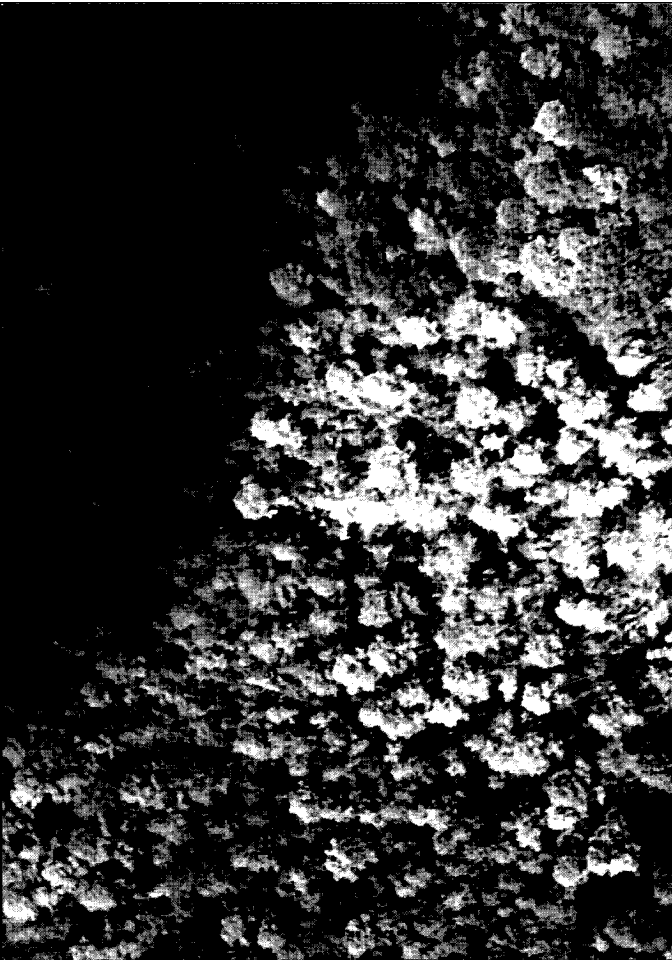
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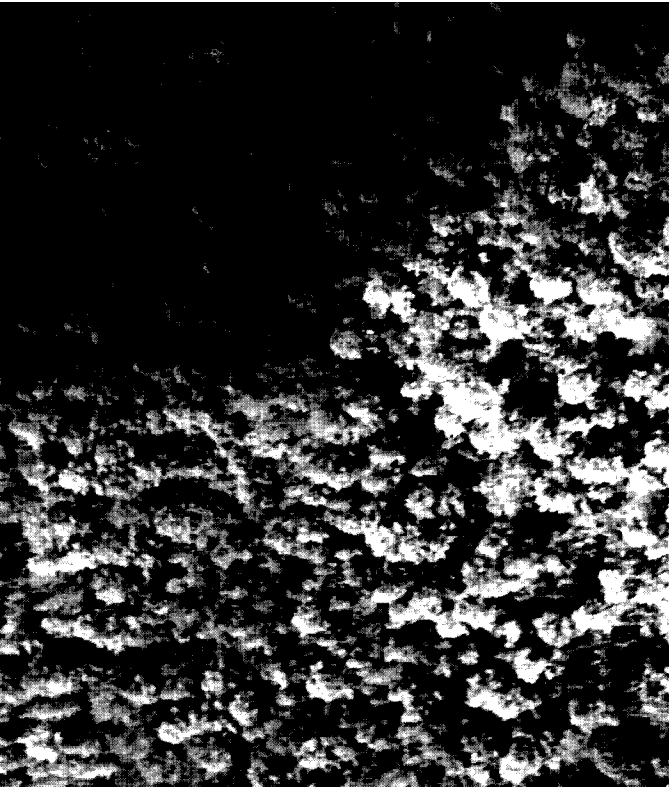
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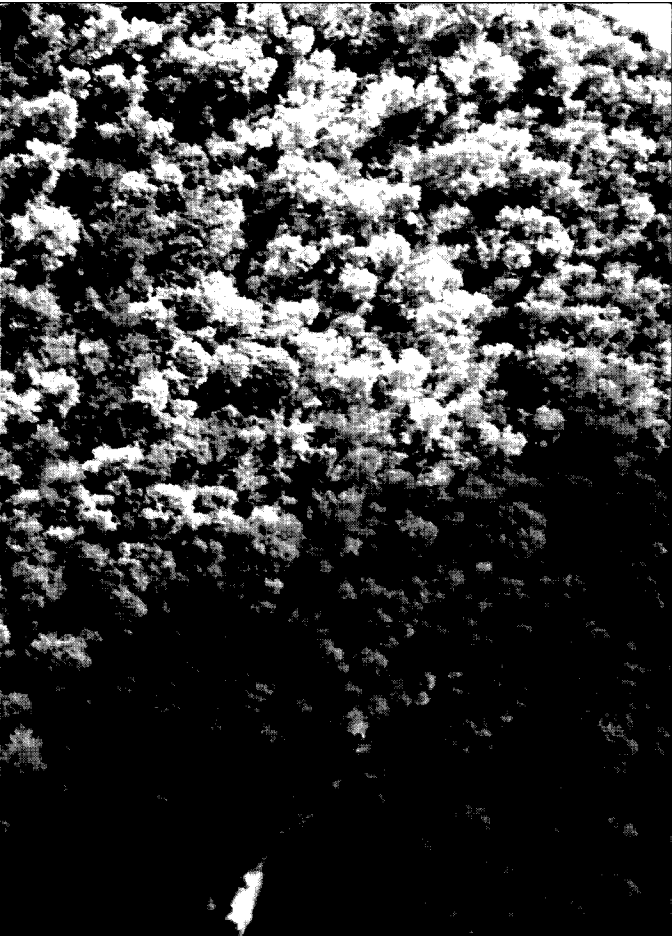
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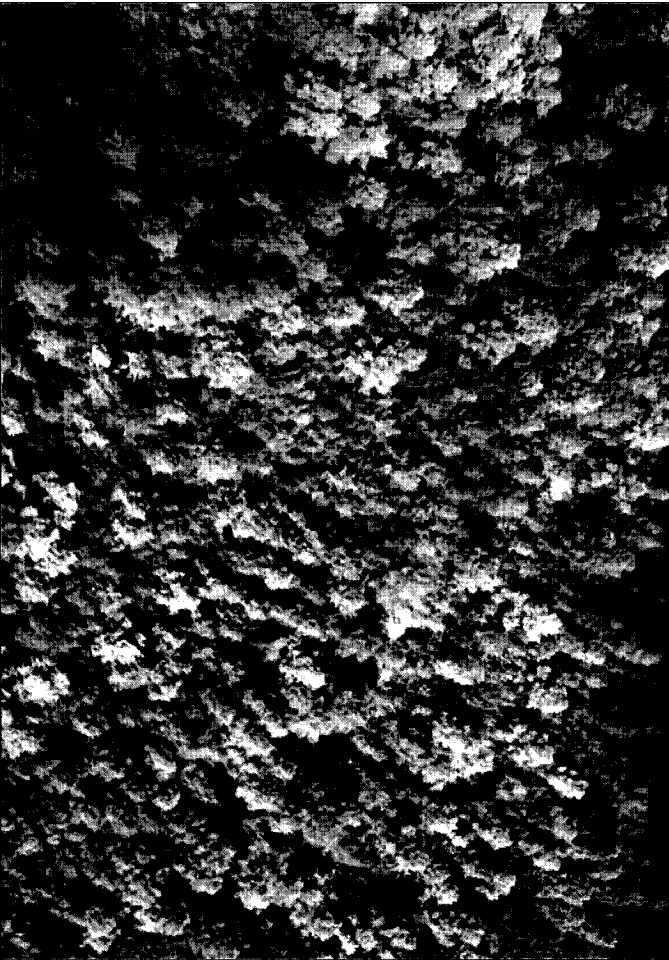










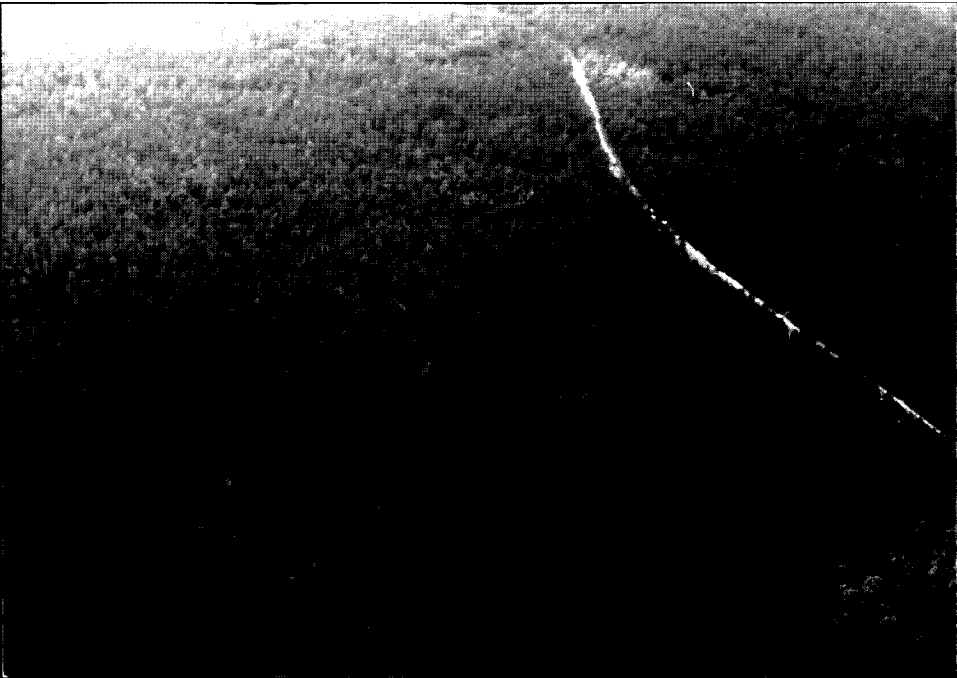








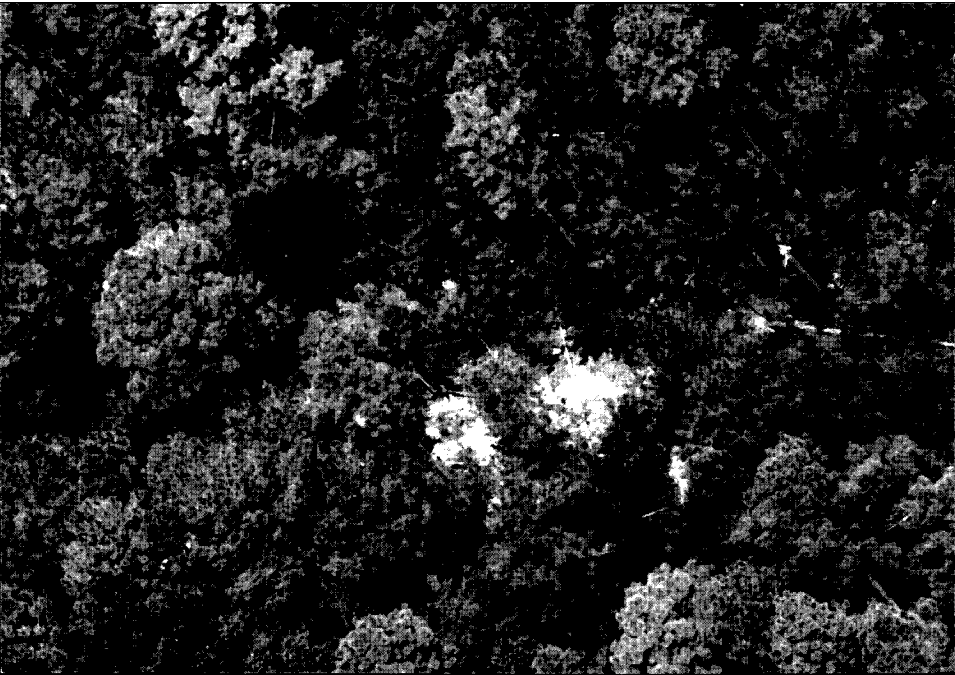




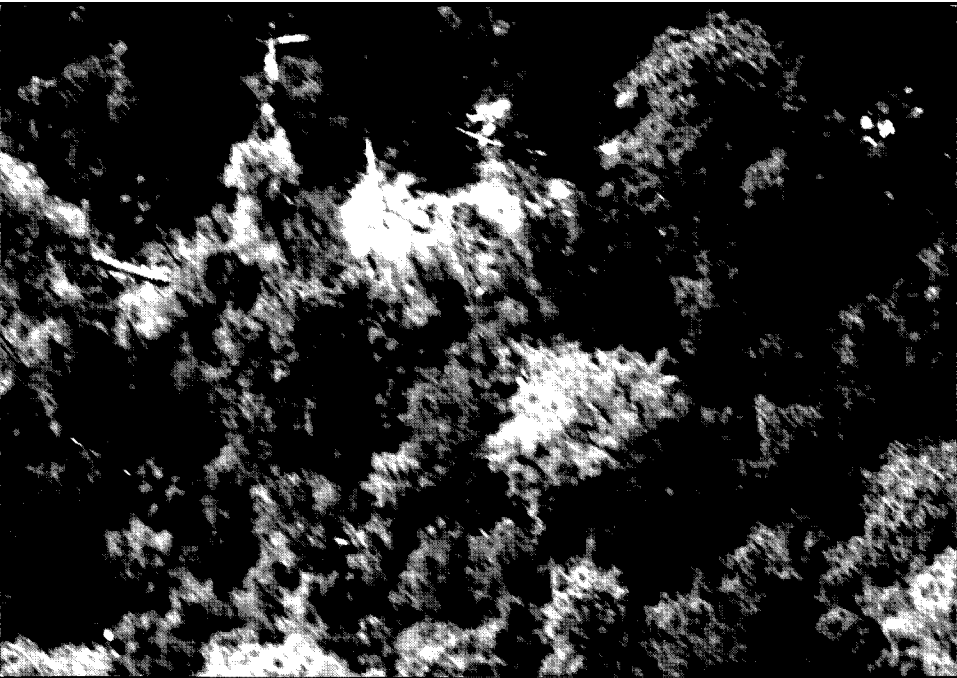


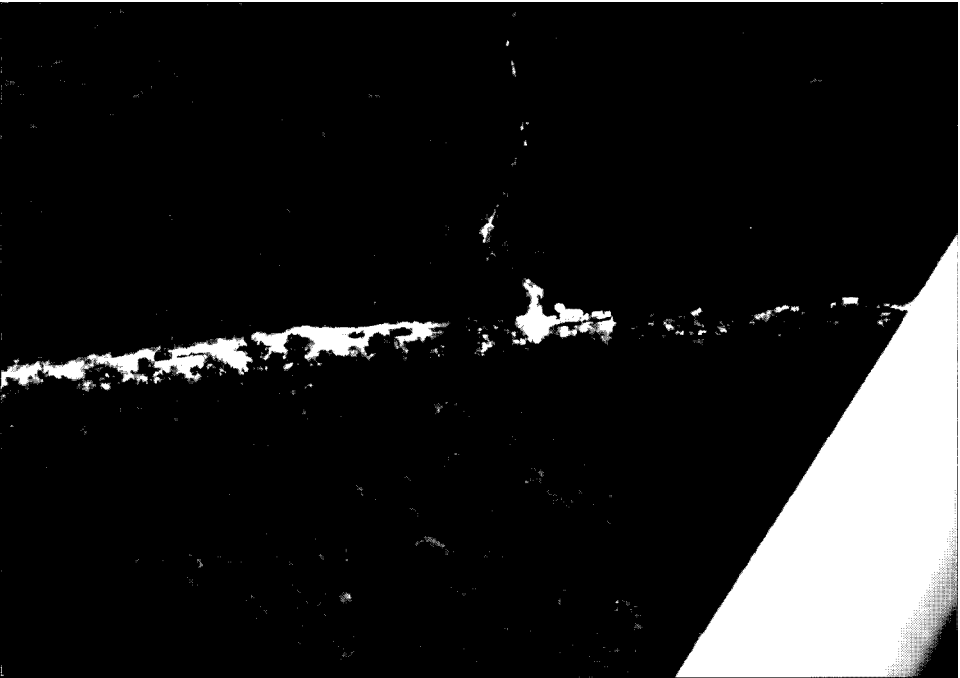


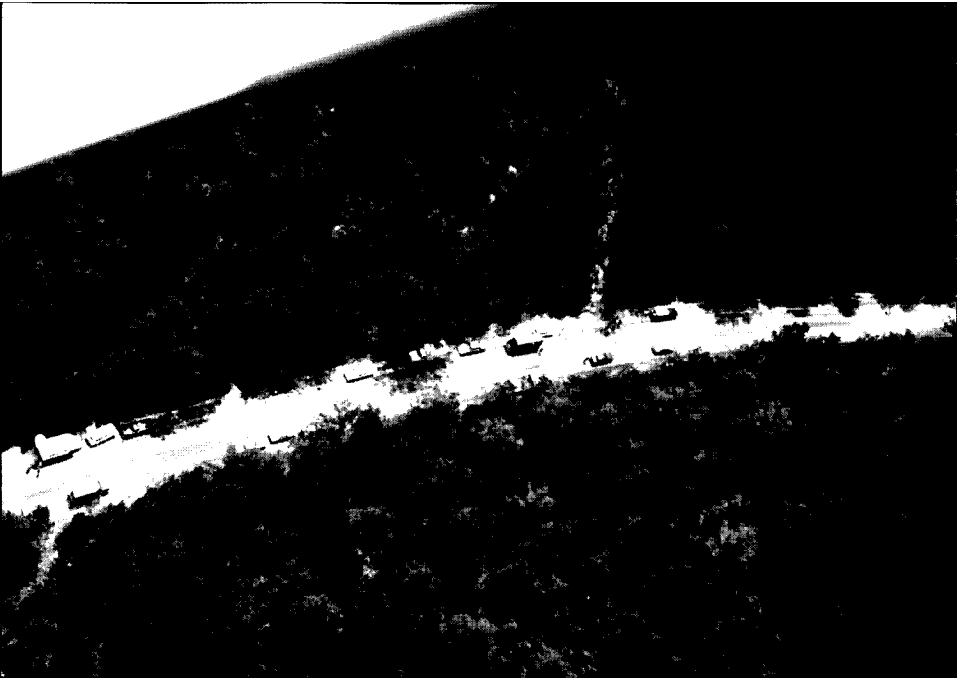


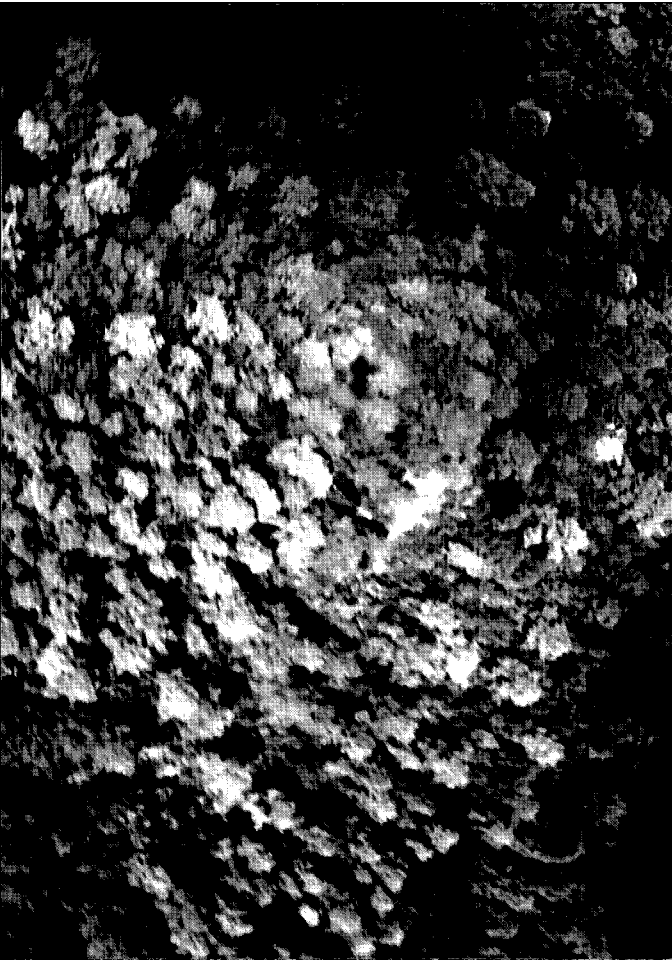






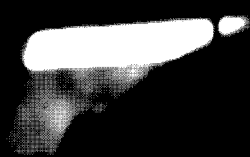




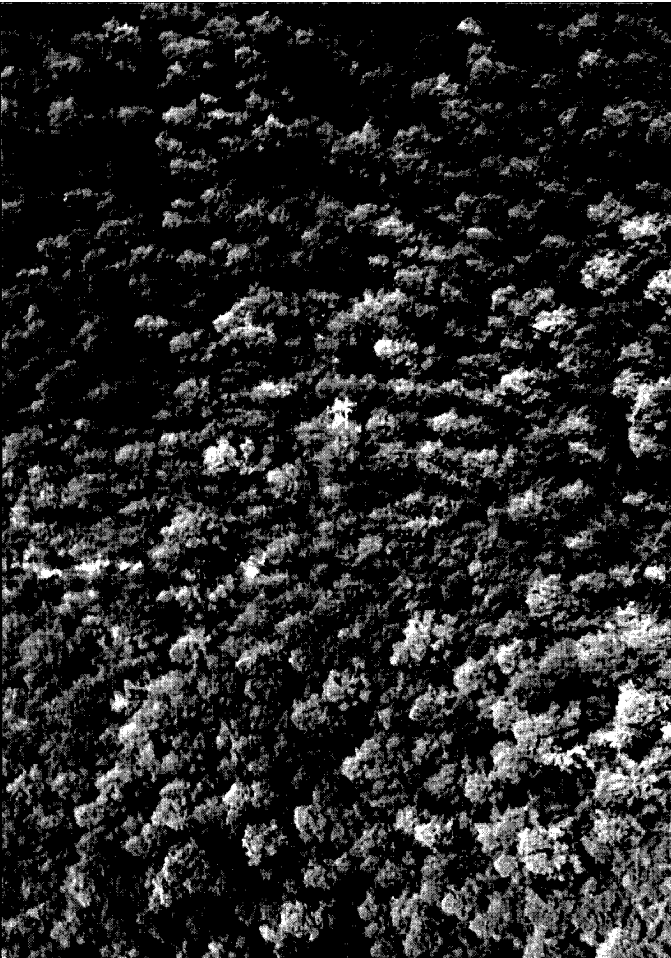


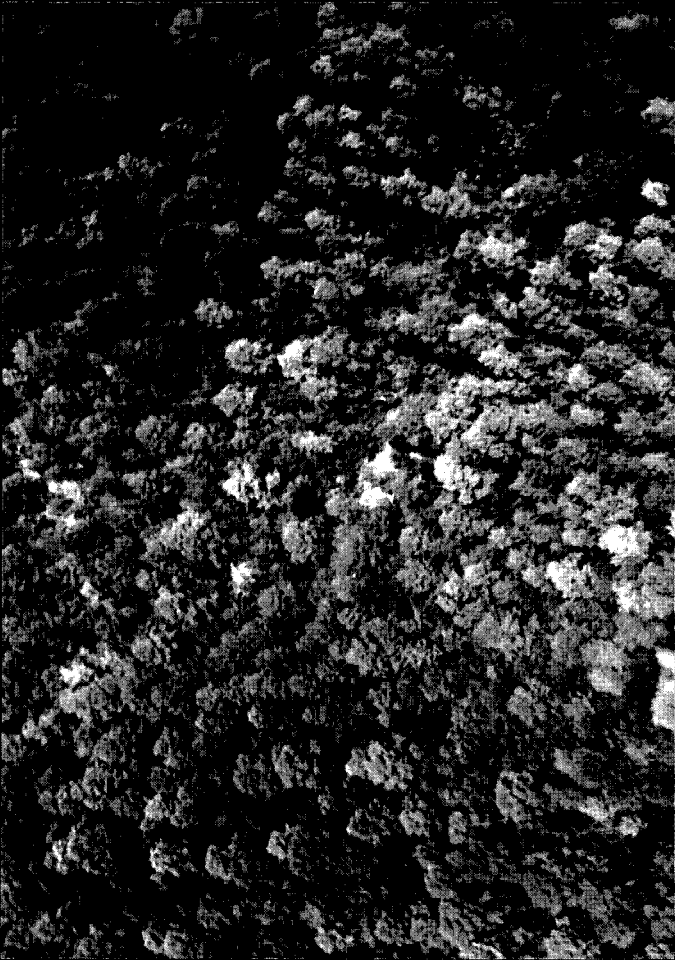


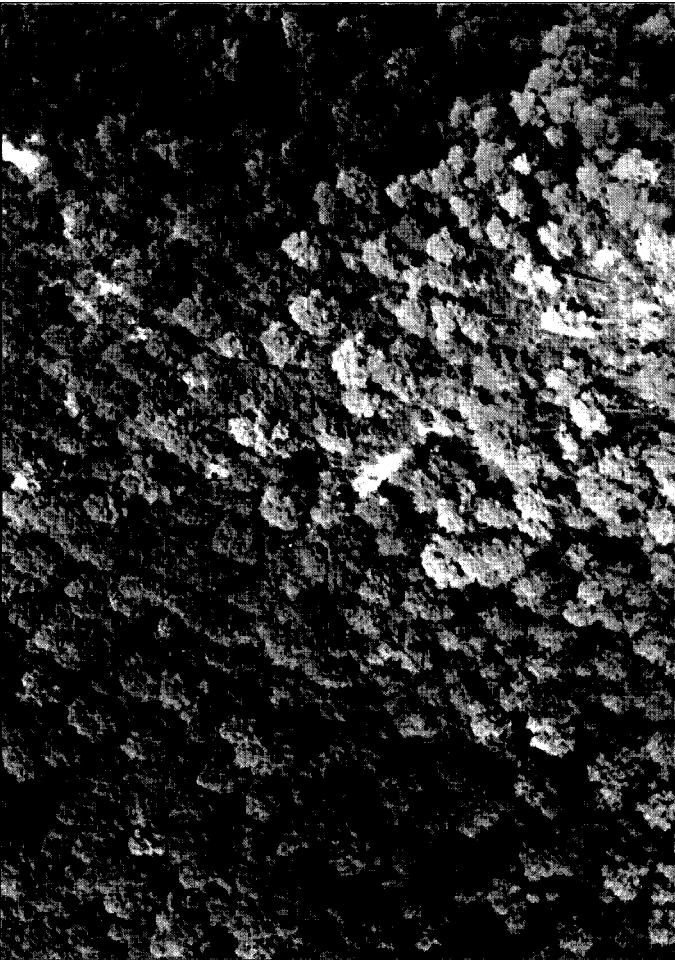


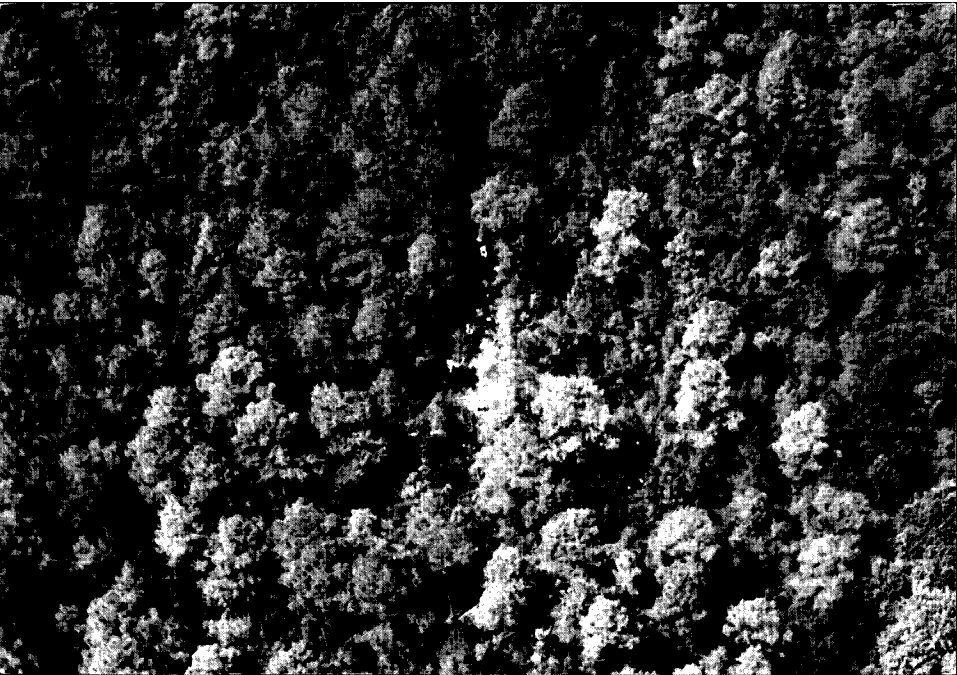


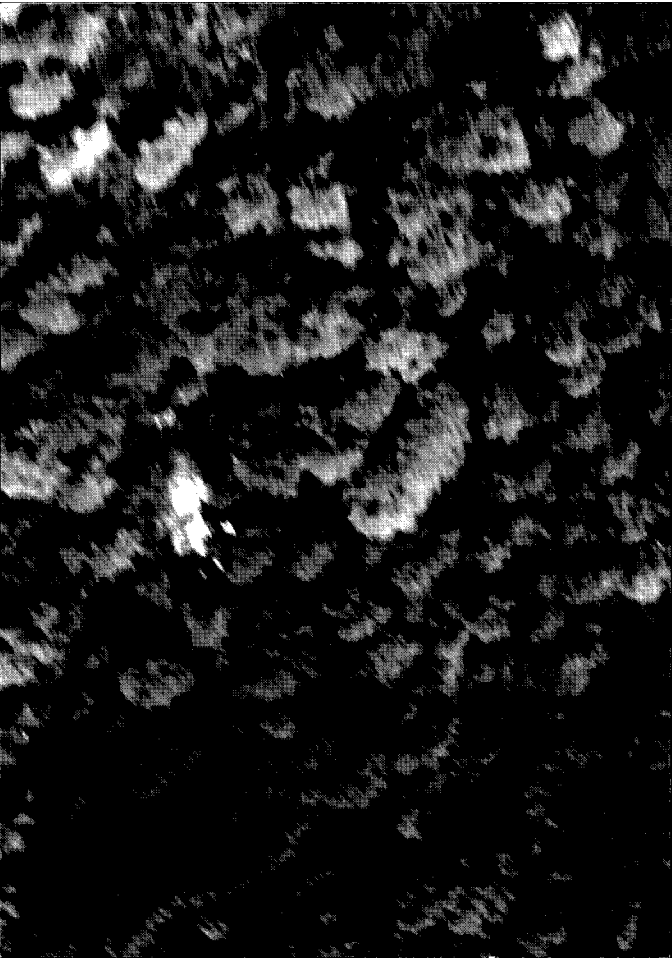


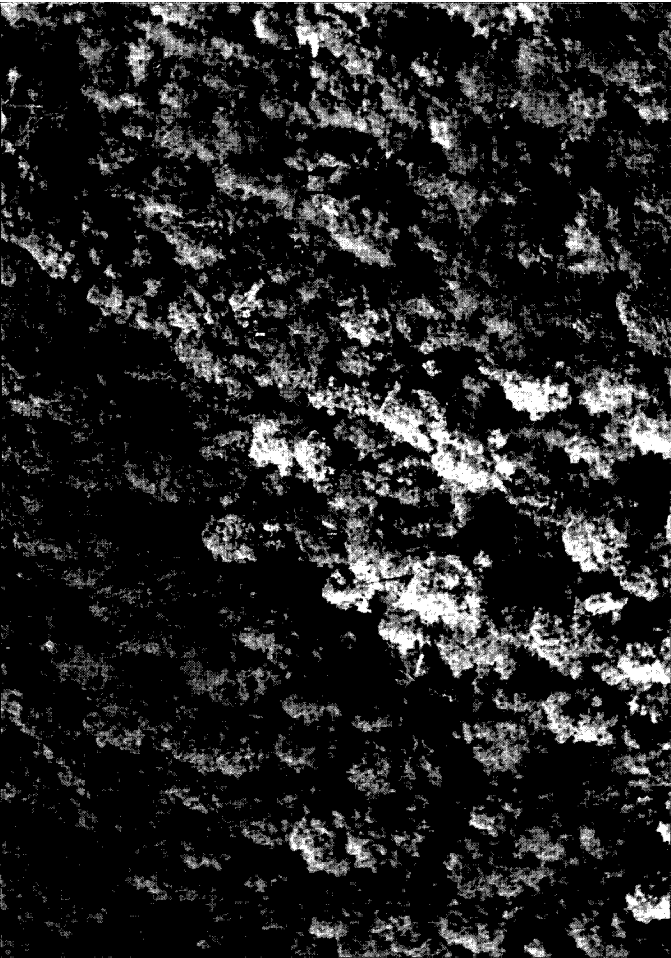




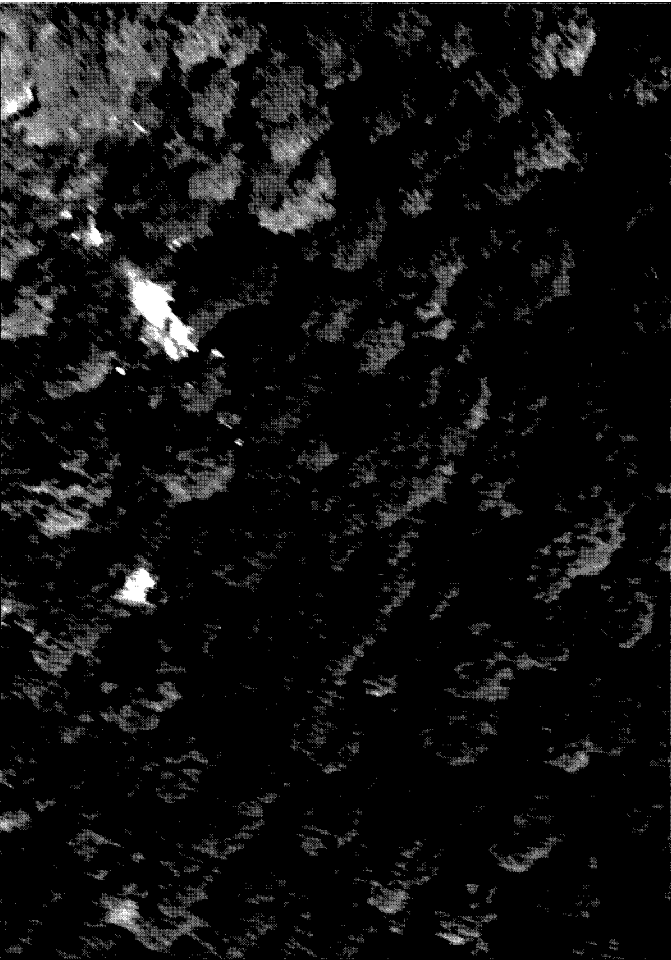






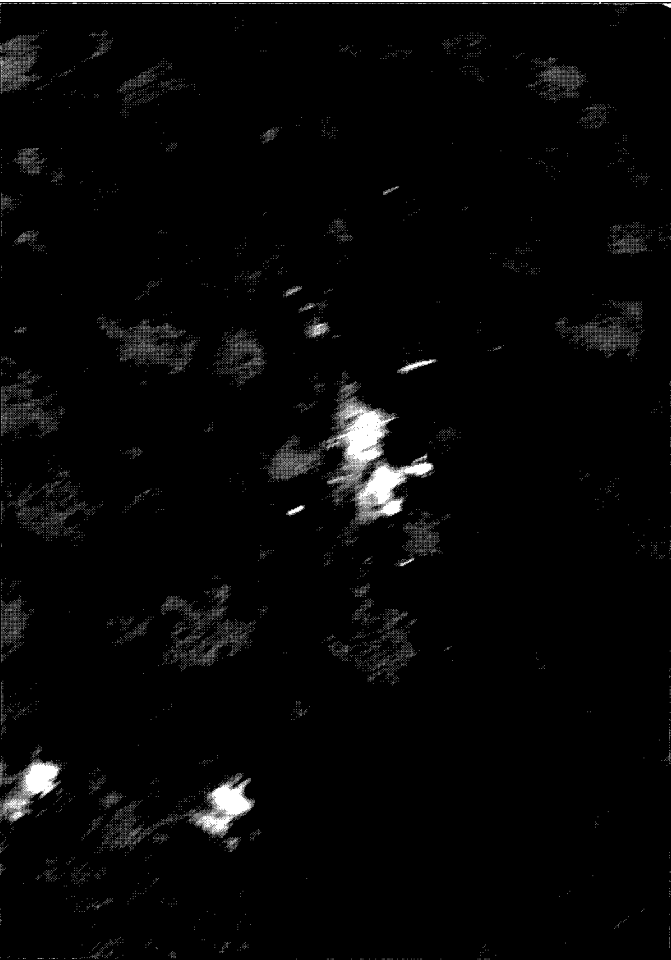


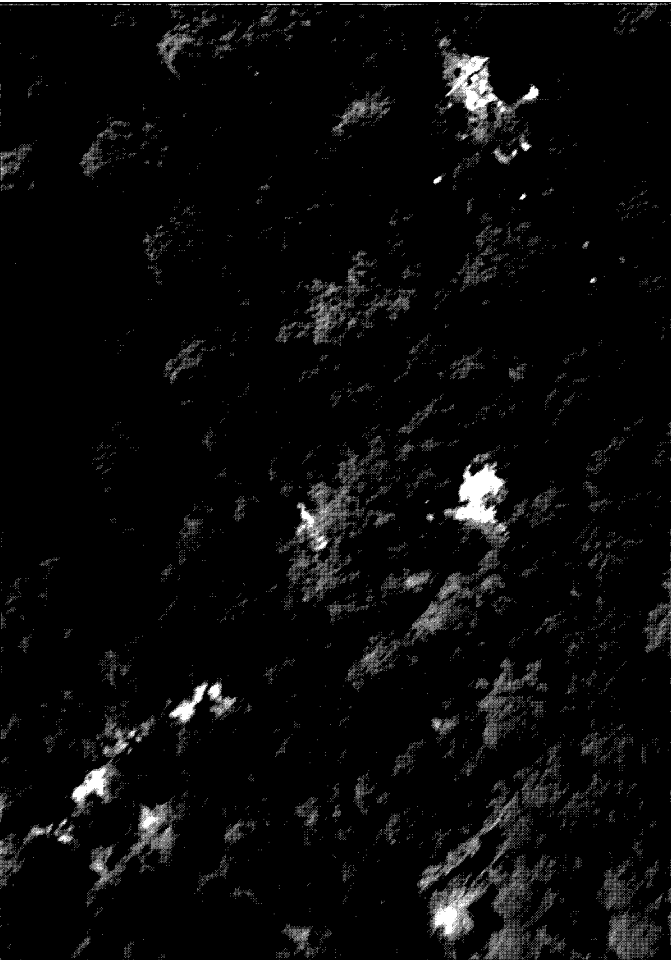


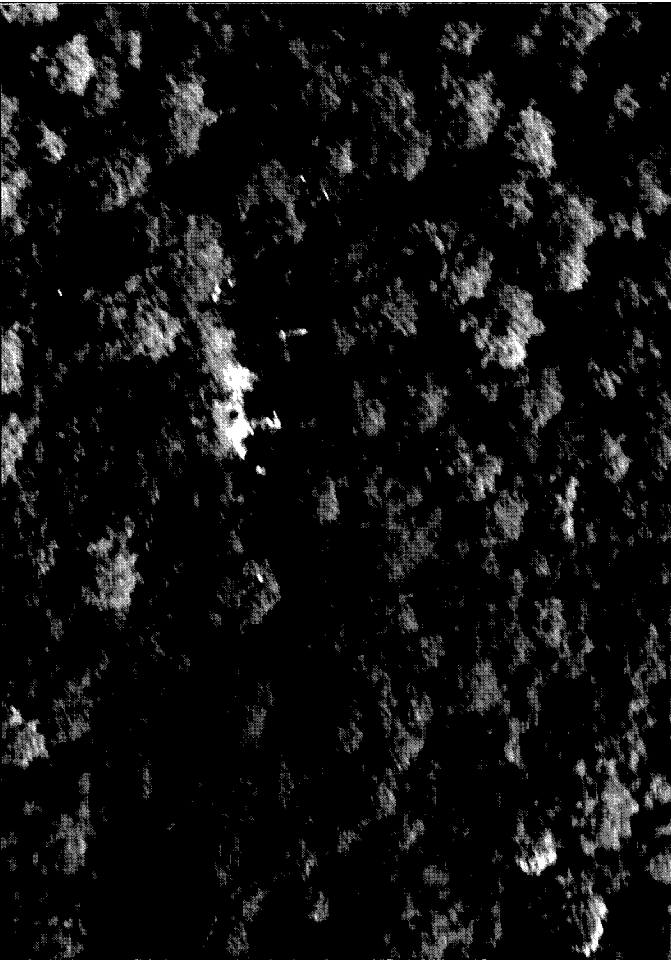




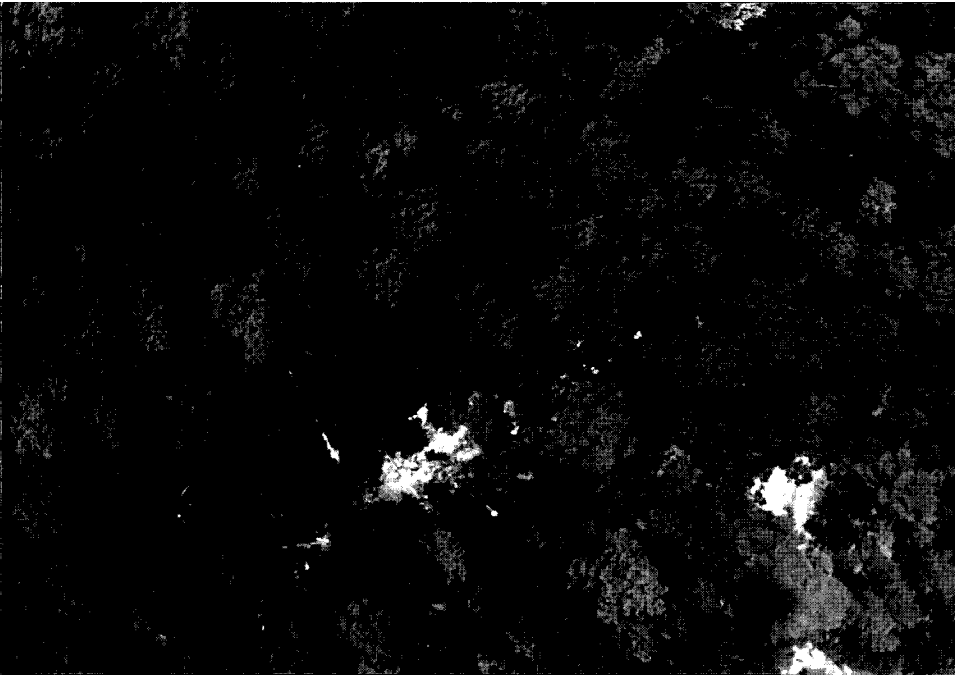




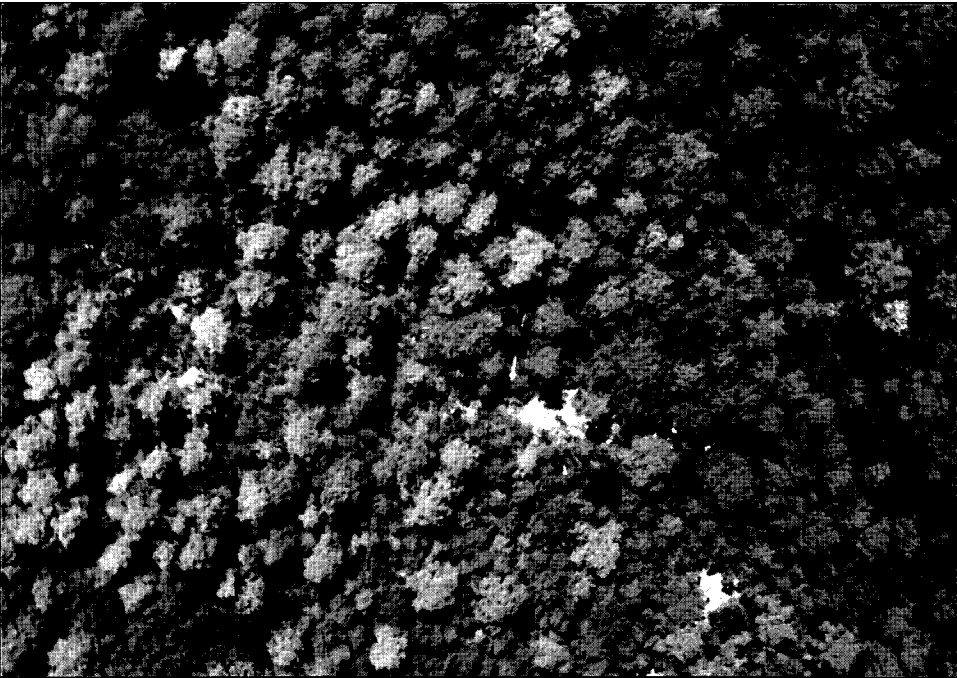


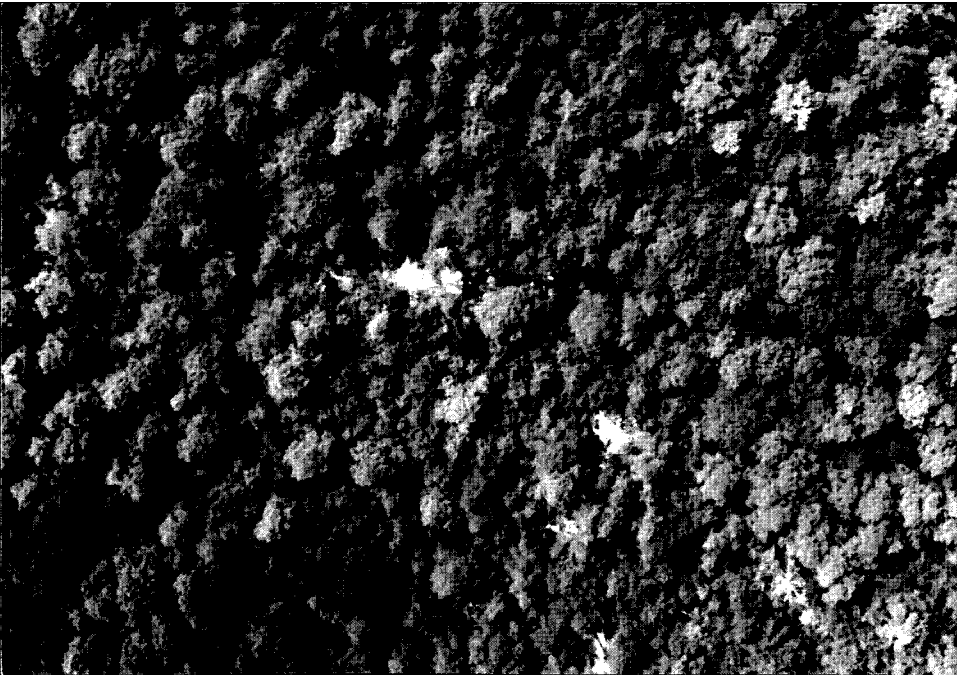


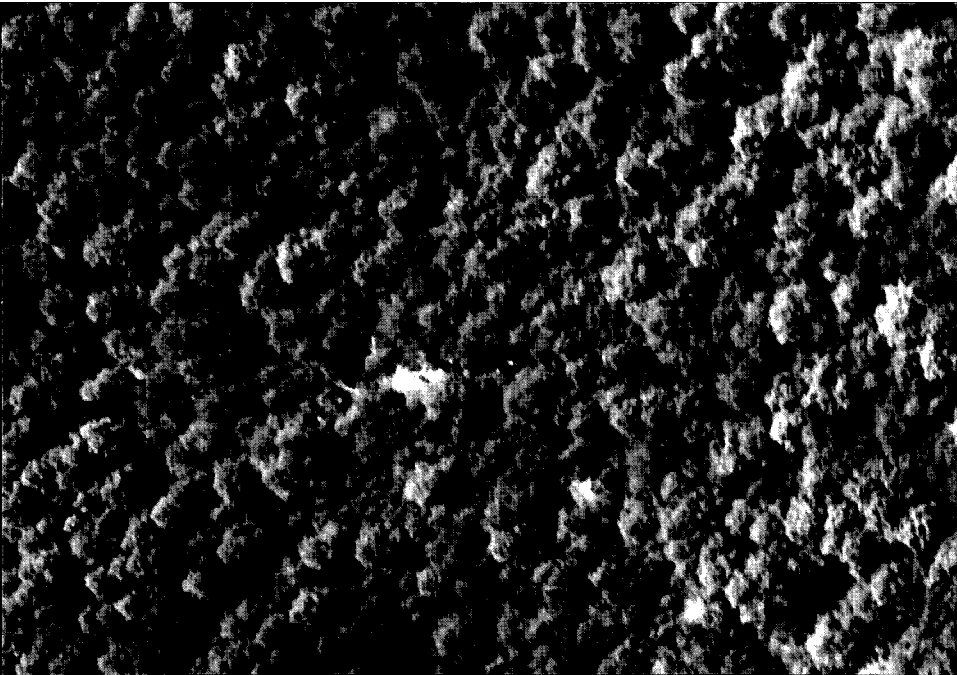


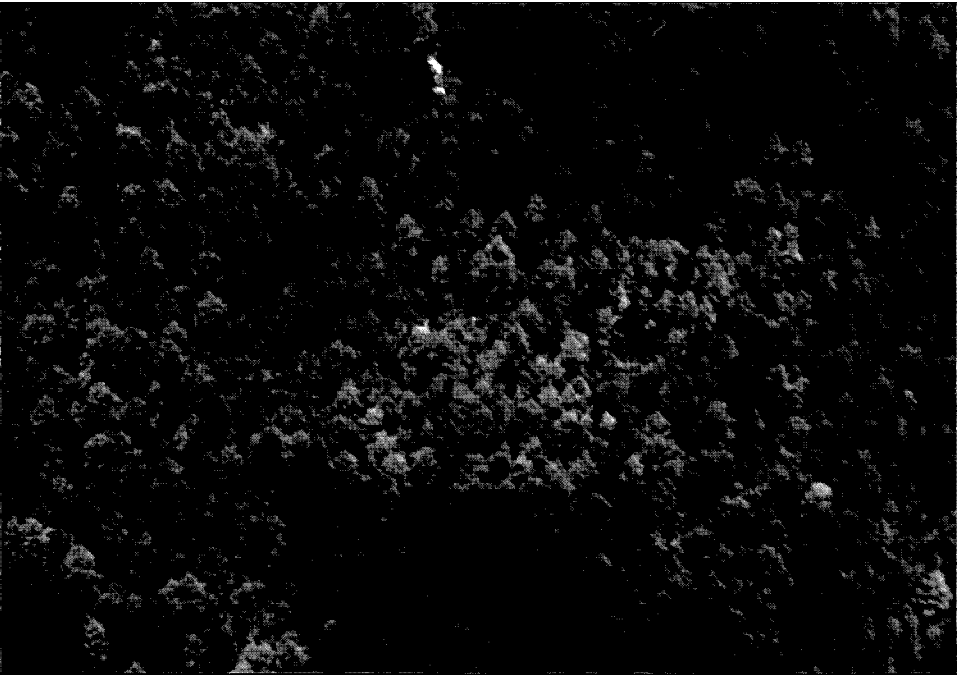


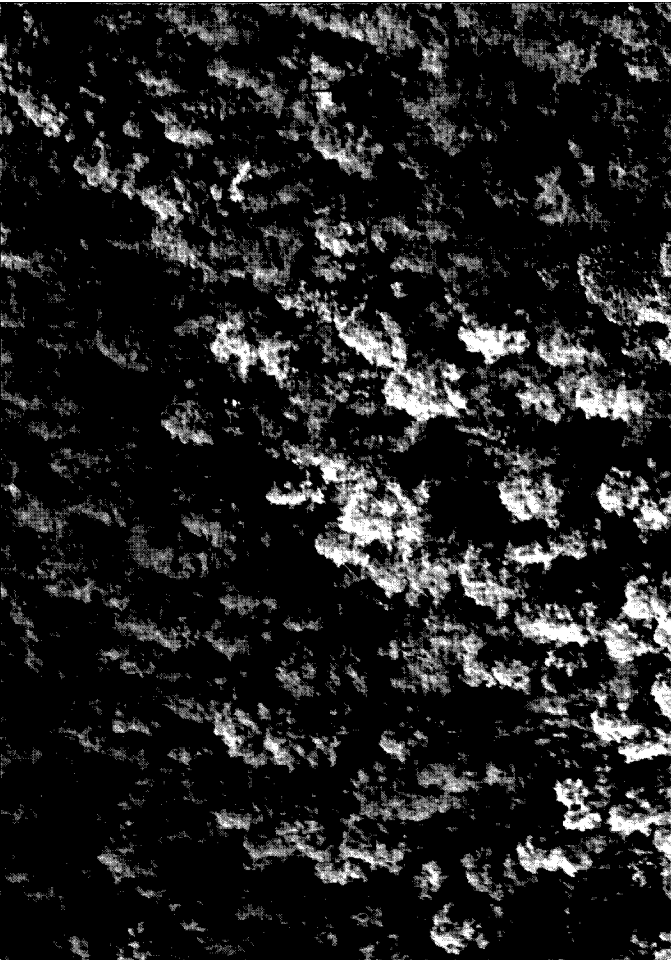




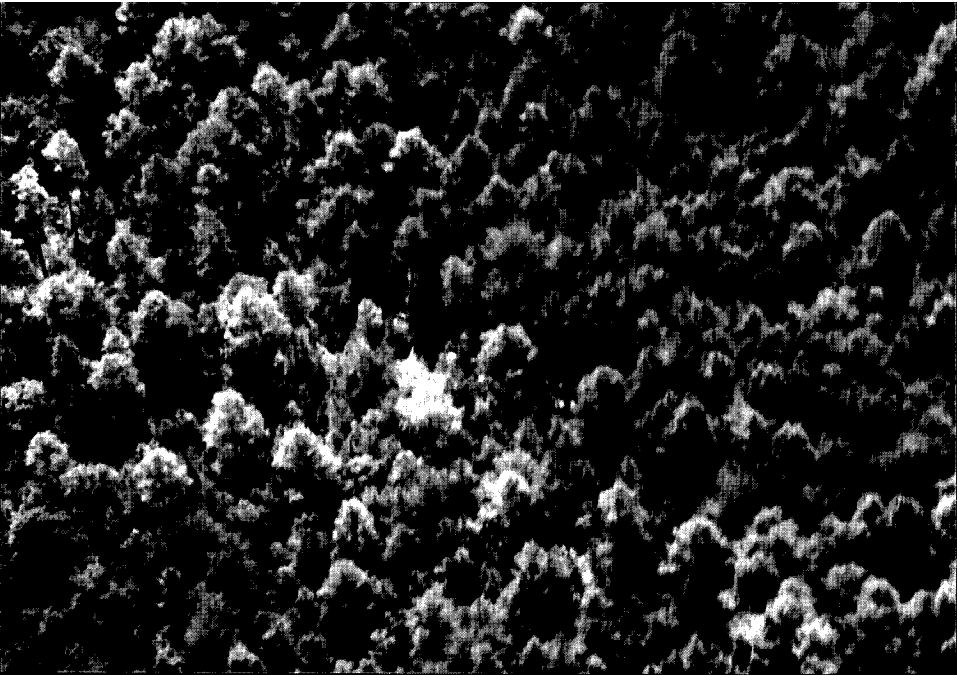


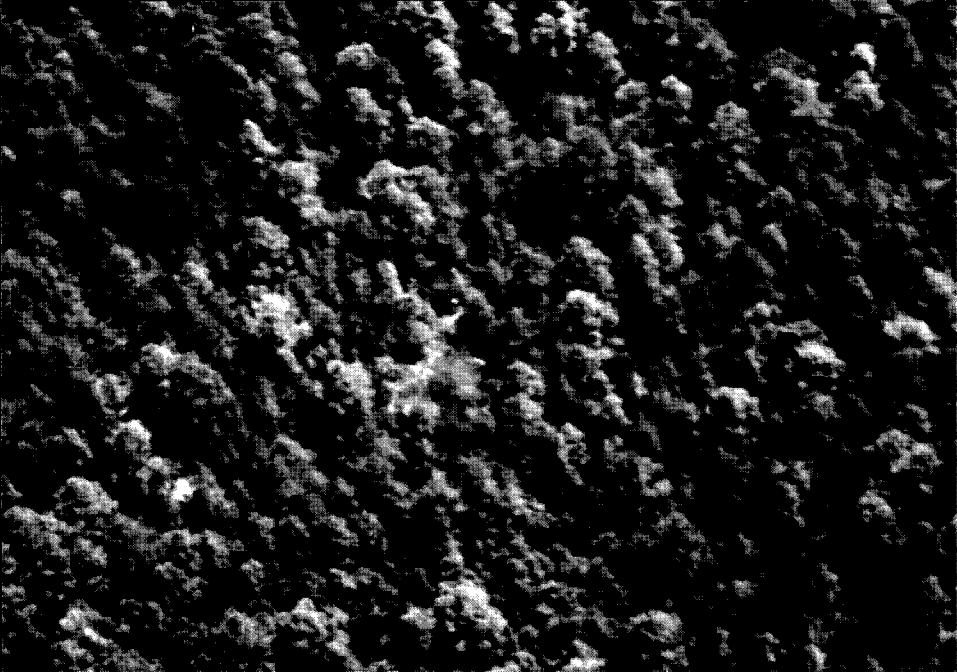
















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101	35mm				201	110					301	16mm								401	Contact			b6
102	120 or				202	135 - 12					302	35mm								402	2 x 3 C			b7C
103	4 x 5				203	135 - 20					303	70mm								403	Cred M			
104	8 x				204	135 - 24					304	105mm								404	Cred C			
105	Dupe				205	135 - 36														405	3 1/2 x 5 M			
106	Orig/Title				206	120														406	3 1/2 x 5 C			
107	Red				207	220														407	4 x 5 M			
108	Mugs				208	4 x 5														408	4 x 5 C			
109	Portrait				209	8 x 10														409	5 x 7 M			
110	Object																			410	5 x 7 C			
111	D.O. (FBIHQ only)																			411	8 x 10 M			
112	G&G																			412	8 x 10 C			
113	Executive (GS-16 & above)																			413	11 x 14 M			
114	Crime Scene																			414	11 x 14 C			
115	Surveillance																			415	16 x 20 C			
116	Aerial																			416	20 x 24 C			
117	Other (Specify)																			417	30 x 40 C			
118	Copy																			418	40 x 60 C			
119	Fig.																			419	DOC			
120	Slide																			420	Trans			
TOTAL																								

WORK REQUESTS

Priority	In-House	In	Out	Total
1				
2				
Total				

Year to Date

BPA		
	TIMES USED	AMT SPENT
BR		
Supplies		
Emerg. Color		

Silver Recovery Turn Ins	
Gallons	
Troy Ounces	

Training Provided		
	Prep Hrs.	Class Hrs.
FBI		
Other		

Video Work (Hrs.)	
Training	
Case work	
Other (Specify)	

To: Director, FBI
 (Attn: Photographic Processing Unit, Rm. 1B903 TL151)

AIRTEL

From: SAC, ATLANTA
 ATTN: SERGEANT
 SAC, [REDACTED] 49A-JN-17714) (P)

Cost Code: 3320

Date: 8/15/89

b6
b7c

Subject: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE

☒ Unclassified ☐ Confidential ☐ Secret

CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
 MEMBER OF CONGRESS, FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL
 DISTRICT, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
 DAMV : OO: JACKSON

ENCLOSURES:

CONTACT FOR INFORMATION: SA [REDACTED]

FTS- 490-4697

	Size	Type	Quantity
Film	35	Color	2 rolls
Negatives			
Prints			
Other (specify)			

(color and black & white work will not be
 accepted on same request)

WORK REQUESTED:

☐ Develop and print 1 ea. 3½ x 5

Other: X DEVELOP AND PRINT TWO EACH 3½X5

9527

9528



701

JUSTIFICATION: ONGOING INVESTIGATION

PHOTO TECHNICIAN (Intl.) _____

FBIHQ USE ONLY

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FBIHQ Enclosure

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Field File No. 149A-JN-17714-1A2

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To Be Returned ☐ Yes ☒ No Receipt Given ☐ Yes ☒ No

Grand Jury Material - Disseminate Only Pursuant to Rule 6(e), Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure ☐ Yes ☒ No

Title:

Reference: _____
(Communication Enclosing Material)

Description: ☐ Original notes re interview of

*Receipt re disposition of watch
of Congressman Larkin Smith to*

on 10/24/89

b6
b7c

b6
b7c

RECEIPT

ON OCTOBER 24, 1989, A DAMAGED WATCH, BEARING
SERIAL NUMBER 643521, WHICH WAS REPORTEDLY FOUND BY A CITIZEN
IN PERRY COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, ON OR ABOUT SEPTEMBER 23, 1989,
AT THE CRASH SITE OF CONGRESSMAN LARKIN I. SMITH, WAS RELEASED
TO [REDACTED] AFTER SHE IDENTIFIED IT [REDACTED]

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b7C

[REDACTED]
A COPY OF THE FRONT AND BACK OF THE WATCH IS ATTACHED
HERETO:

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] FBI, GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI

Field File No.

149A-JN-17714-1A (3)

Serial # of Originating Document

OO and File No.

Jackson

Date Received

12/1/89

From

(Name of Contributor)

(Address of Contributor)

(City and State)

By

(Name of Special Agent)

To Be Returned ☐ Yes ☒ No Receipt Given ☐ Yes ☒ No

Grand Jury Material - Disseminate Only Pursuant to Rule 6(e), Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure ☐ Yes ☒ No

Title:

Reference:

(Communication Enclosing Material)

Description: ☐ Original notes re interview of

OTHER SEALED

Universal File Case Number 149A-JN-17714-1A⁽⁴⁾

Field Office Acquiring Evidence JN

Serial # of Originating Document 26

Date Received 3/10/99

From FBI JN

(Name of Contributor)

(Address of Contributor)

(City and State)

By AECT

(Special Agent)

To Be Returned ☐ Yes ☐ No

Receipt Given ☐ Yes ☐ No

Grand Jury Material - Disseminate Only Pursuant to Rule 6 (e)

Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure

☐ Yes ☐ No

Title:

Reference: _____

(Communication Enclosing Material)

Description: ☐ Original notes re interview of

Package copy of FD-192 for FBI

b6
b7C

CHAIN OF CUSTODY

Accepted Custody		Date	Time	Released Custody		Date	Time
Signature		7/9/90	8:15 A	Signature		9/28/90	1:40 P
Reason	evidence			Reason	for storage		
Signature		9/28/90	1:40 P	Signature		3/10/99	7:51 AM
Reason	storage			Reason	per serial 26 on 13/12/99		
Signature				Signature			
Reason				Reason			
Signature				Signature			
Reason				Reason			
Signature				Signature			
Reason				Reason			
Signature				Signature			
Reason				Reason			
Signature				Signature			
Reason				Reason			

Item No.

Remarks

131 Received 7/1/90 for processing

149A-JN- 17714-1A (4)

b6
b7C

Date

7/9/90

Title and Character of Case

INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE
CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS,
FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI AUGUST 13, 1989

Date Property Acquired

7/9/90

Source From Which Property Acquired

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Location of Property or Bulky Exhibit

GULFPORT RA

Reason for Retention of Property and Efforts Made to Dispose of Same

Evidence

To Be Returned

☐ Yes ☒ No

See Serial

Agent Submitting Property or Exhibit

Agent Assigned Case

☐ Yes ☒ No Grand Jury Property - Disseminate Only Pursuant to Rule 6(e), Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

☐ Yes ☒ No Property to be Forfeited to the Government

Description of Property or Exhibit

① EXTENSIVE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
BOARD ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ FACTUAL REPORT prepared
by NTSB CRASH INVESTIGATOR
OF THEIR MIAMI OFFICE

② OFFICIAL DETERMINATION OF CAUSE FINDING,
CONSISTING OF TWO(2) PAGES, ISSUED
by THE NTSB, WASHINGTON, D.C., 6/ /90

For Valuable and/or Narcotics Evidence Only

Evidence Bag Seal # _____

Signature of Two
Special Agents
Verifying and Sealing
Bag Contents _____

SEMIANNUAL INVENTORY CERTIFICATION TO JUSTIFY RETENTION OF PROPERTY (Initial and Date)

Destroyed per serial 26 on 3/10/99. See 1A⁽⁴⁾
original FD-192

Field File # 149A-JN-17714 -1B1

OO: JACKSON

ORIGINAL (FILE COPY)

BLOCK STAMP	
149A-JN-17714-1B1	
SEARCHED.....	INDEXED.....
SERIALIZED.....	FILED.....
JUL 11 1990	
FBI - JACKSON	

b6
b7C

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b6
b7C

CHAIN OF CUSTODY

[illegible][illegible]

- 1 -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 8/18/89

[redacted] Crash Investigator, NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB), telephonically advised Special Agent (SA) [redacted] they had removed the wreckage from the crash site of Congressman LARKIN SMITH to KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE (KAFB), Hangar Four, Biloxi, Mississippi.

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[redacted] stated a careful examination of the aircraft parts has not revealed any evidence whatsoever the airplane crashed from a possible act of sabotage. [redacted] indicated that months of laboratory examinations will follow, but that the likely cause of the crash was accidental with mechanical failure and/or pilot error being involved.

The final report regarding the crash, which will be compiled by the NTSB investigators from Miami, Florida, is not expected to be released until early to mid-1990.

Investigation on 8/16/89 at Gulfport, Mississippi File # 149A-JN-17714-3
by SA [redacted] Date dictated 8/17/89

b6
b7C

AUG 16 1989

149-JN-17714

Dear [redacted]

I was extremely sorry to learn of the death of [redacted] and on behalf of the entire FBI, I extend heartfelt sympathy to you and your family. Words afford little comfort at a difficult time like this, but I wanted you to know that you are in our thoughts and prayers.

[redacted] served the citizens of Mississippi not only as their elected representative, but also for many years as a law enforcement officer. You must be very proud of his dedicated service and his commitment to the welfare of others. We hope your loving memories of him and the knowledge that your grief is shared by so many will help ease the burden of his loss and afford you comfort during the days ahead.

Sincerely,

William S. Sessions
William S. Sessions
Director

① - Jackson

MANUAL
POSITIVE _____ NEGATIVE _____

POSITIVE ☒ AUTOMATED
NEGATIVE _____

149A-JN-17714-4

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0001 NRI 01865

00 RUEHFB FBIJN

DE FBINO 00019 2370106

ZNY EEEEE

O 242158Z AUG 89

FM FBI NEW ORLEANS (89A-JN-NEW) (P)

TO DIRECTOR FBI/IMMEDIATE/

FBI JACKSON/IMMEDIATE/

BT

UNCLAS E F T O

CITE: //3530:SQUAD 5//

PASS: HQ FOR BUREAU SUPERVISOR [REDACTED] VIOLENT CRIMES

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b7C

UNIT, CID, JN FOR SSA [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: [REDACTED]

LARKIN

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b7C

SMITH, MEMBER OF U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - VICTIM

(DECEASED); AFO/ASSASSINATION OF A MEMBER OF CONGRESS; OO:

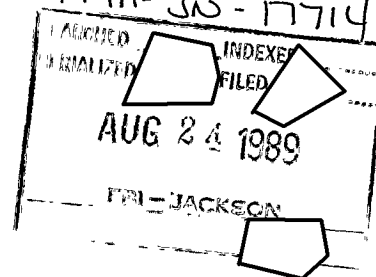
JACKSON.

REFERENCE NEW ORLEANS TELEPHONE CALL OF SSA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C

TO SSA [REDACTED] FBIHQ, THIS DATE, AND NEW ORLEANS TELEPHONE

CALL OF SSA [REDACTED] TO SSA [REDACTED] JACKSON DIVISION,



b6
b7C

PAGE TWO DE FBINO 0019 UNCLAS E F T O

THIS DATE.

FOR INFORMATION, AT 1:45 A.M. THIS DATE, THE NEW ORLEANS
OFFICE COMPLAINT CLERK RECEIVED AN ANONYMOUS TELEPHONE CALL AT
THE NEW ORLEANS SWITCHBOARD, (504)522-4671. THE FOLLOWING IS THE
VERBATUM TEXT AS RECORDED ON THE COMPLAINT FORM:

[Redacted Content]

b6
b7C
b7D

NEW ORLEANS COMPLAINT CLERK STATED THAT THE CALLER APPEARED

LEGITIMATE. THE CALLER [REDACTED]

b6
b7C
b7D

NEW ORLEANS INDICES NEGATIVE FOR [REDACTED]

b6
b7C

[REDACTED] OR INFORMATION IDENTIFIABLE WITH [REDACTED]

A REVIEW OF NEW ORLEANS FILES CONCERNING [REDACTED]

REFLECTS THAT CALLER IS [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] IS DESCRIBED AS (XX)NAME: [REDACTED]

RACE:

[REDACTED] SEX:

[REDACTED] DOB

[REDACTED] HEIGHT:

[REDACTED] ; WEIGHT:

b6
b7C

PER BUREAU INSTRUCTIONS, JACKSON IS TO IMMEDIATELY CONTACT THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD AND DETERMINE IF A CAUSE OF THE CRASH OF CONGRESSMAN SMITH'S PLANE HAS BEEN DETERMINED. JACKSON IS NOT TO REVEAL AT THIS TIME TO THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD THE PURPOSE FOR THIS INQUIRY OR THE FACT THAT THE ABOVE INFORMATION HAS BEEN RECEIVED.

PAGE FOUR DE FBINO 0019 UNCLAS E F T O

JACKSON MAY CONSIDER OBTAINING

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b7E

JACKSON AND THE BUREAU WILL BE ADVISED OF ANY ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION RECEIVED AT NEW ORLEANS.

BT

00019

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NNNN

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☒ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☐ _____

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☒ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☒ UNCLAS

Date 8/25/89

1 FM FBI JACKSON (149A-JN-17714) (P)

2 TO DIRECTOR FBI/PRIORITY/

3 FBI NEW ORLEANS/PRIORITY/

4 BT

5 UNCLAS

6 CITE: //3320:2842//

7 PASS: HQ FOR BUREAU SUPERVISOR [REDACTED] VIOLENT CRIMES

8 UNIT, CIT; NEW ORLEANS FOR SSA [REDACTED]

9
 10 SUBJECT: INFORMATION CONCERNING ^{2 plane} AIRLINE CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN
 11 I. SMITH, MEMBER OF CONGRESS, FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, STATE
 12 OF MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 13, 1989.

13 REFERENCE JACKSON TELETYPE TO THE BUREAU, DATED 8/14/89; NEW
 14 ORLEANS TELEPHONE CALL OF SSA [REDACTED] TO SSA [REDACTED]
 15 [REDACTED] FBIHQ, 8/24/89; NEW ORLEANS TELEPHONE CALL OF SSA [REDACTED]
 16 TO SSA [REDACTED] JACKSON DIVISION, 8/24/89; AND NEW ORLEANS

17
 18 1-jackson
 19 [REDACTED]
 20 (4)
 21

149-JN-17714-6

Searched
 Serialized
 Indexed
 Filed

b6
b7Cb6
b7Cb6
b7C

Approved: [REDACTED]

Transmitted

(Number)

VLRO064.237

(Time)

Per [REDACTED]

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☐ _____

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☐ UNCLAS

Date _____

1 ^PAGE TWO DE JN 149A-JN-17714 UNCLAS

2 TELETYPE TO THE BUREAU AND JACKSON, DATED 8/24/89.

3 ON 8/16/89, [] CRASH INVESTIGATOR, NATIONAL
 4 TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB), TELEPHONICALLY ADVISED SA []
 5 [] THEY HAD REMOVED THE AIRCRAFT WRECKAGE FROM THE CRASH
 6 SITE OF CONGRESSMAN LARKIN SMITH TO KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE
 7 (KAFB), HANGAR FOUR, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI.

8 [] STATED A CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF THE AIRCRAFT PARTS
 9 HAD NOT REVEALED ANY EVIDENCE WHATSOEVER THE AIRPLANE CRASHED
 10 FROM A POSSIBLE ACT OF SABOTAGE. [] INDICATED THAT MONTHS
 11 OF LABORATORY EXAMINATIONS WILL FOLLOW, BUT THAT THE LIKELY CAUSE
 12 OF THE CRASH WAS ACCIDENTAL WITH MECHANICAL FAILURE AND/OR PILOT
 13 ERROR BEING INVOLVED.

14 ON 8/23/89, NTSB INVESTIGATOR [] TELEPHONICALLY ADVISED
 15 SA [] THERE WAS STILL NO EVIDENCE WHATSOEVER OF SABOTAGE, AND
 16 IT IS HIS OPINION, AT THIS POINT IN THE INVESTIGATION, THE
 17 LIKELY CAUSE OF THE CRASH WAS SPACIAL DISORIENTATION OF THE
 18 PILOT.

19 [] FURTHER STATED WITNESSES AT THE HATTIESBURG,
 20 MISSISSIPPI, MUNICIPAL AIRPORT, WHERE THE FLIGHT ORIGINATED, HAD
 21 DESCRIBED PILOT CHARLES J. "CHUCK" VIERLING AS BEING VERY

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b6
 b7C

Approved: _____ Transmitted _____ Per _____
 (Number) (Time)

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

- ☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☐ _____

PRECEDENCE:

- ☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

- ☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☐ UNCLAS

Date _____

1 ^PAGE THREE DE JN 149A-JN-17714 UNCLAS

2 APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE PENDING NIGHT FLIGHT. VIERLING IN FACT
3 RAN OFF THE RUNWAY WHEN TAXING INTO POSITION FOR TAKEOFF. IT
4 SHOULD BE NOTED VIERLING DID NOT HAVE HIS INSTRUMENT RATING AS A
5 PILOT. RADAR TRACKING DATA REVIEWED BY NTSB ALSO INDICATES AN
6 IRREGULAR FLIGHT PATTERN BY THE AIRCRAFT PRIOR TO THE CRASH. THE
7 AIRCRAFT, AT THE TIME IT CRASHED, WAS APPROXIMATELY NINE MILES
8 EAST OF ITS INTENDED ROUTE, WHICH WAS TO HAVE BEEN ABOVE U.S.
9 HIGHWAY 49 SOUTHBOUND TO GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI.

10 [REDACTED] INDICATED THE FINAL REPORT FROM NTSB REGARDING THE
11 CRASH WOULD NOT BE RELEASED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS.

12 REGARDING THE [REDACTED] AS OUTLINED
13 IN REFERENCED NEW ORLEANS TELETYPE, A SEARCH OF THE INDICES OF
14 THE JACKSON OFFICE, BOTH MANUAL AND FOIMS, WAS NEGATIVE REGARDING

15 [REDACTED] REGARDING THEIR
16 INVOLVEMENT IN ANY CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. IT WAS NOTED A [REDACTED]
17
18
19
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21

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b6
b7C
b7D

Approved: _____ Transmitted _____ Per _____
(Number) (Time)

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☐ _____

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☐ UNCLAS

Date _____

1 ^PAGE FOUR DE JN 149A-JN-17714 UNCLAS



2 JACKSON WILL CONDUCT [REDACTED] CHECKS REGARDING

3 [REDACTED] AS WELL AS OTHER LOGICAL
4 INVESTIGATION. IF APPROPRIATE, WILL INTERVIEW THEM IN AN ATTEMPT
5 TO FULLY RESOLVE THE ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS RECEIVED BY NEW
6 ORLEANS.

7 INVESTIGATOR [REDACTED] WAS RECONTACTED ON 8/25/89, AND HE
8 STATED AVAILABLE EVIDENCE STILL POINTS TO PILOT ERROR AS THE
9 LIKELY CAUSE OF THE CRASH. TISSUE SAMPLES TESTS TAKEN FROM THE
10 DECEASED PILOT WILL NOT BE COMPLETED FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO MORE
11 WEEKS.

12 BT

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b7D
b7Eb6
b7C

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Approved: _____ Transmitted _____ Per _____
(Number) (Time)

- 1 -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 10/12/89

[redacted] Harrison County Coroner, Gulfport, Mississippi, provided the following two documents which are attached and made a part hereto:

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1) Report of autopsy re decedent LARKIN I. SMITH, United States Congressman.

2) Report of autopsy re decedent CHARLES JAROME VIERLING, Aircraft Pilot.

Investigation on 10/11/89 at Gulfport, Mississippi File # 149A-JN-17714-8
by SA [redacted] Date dictated 10/12/89

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 10/16/89

On October 12, 1989, [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] voluntarily appeared at the
FBI's Gulfport Resident Agency and provided the following
information to Secretary [redacted]:

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On or about September 23, 1989, he was examining the
site in Perry County, Mississippi, where Congressman LARKIN
SMITH's airplane crashed on Sunday evening, August 13, 1989.
While at the crash site he found a damaged watch, without the
band, which at the time it was located displayed the date of
Sunday, August 13, and the time of 10:32. [redacted] speculated it
was likely LARKIN SMITH's watch since the airplane crashed at
approximately 9:30 p.m. Central Daylight Time, and Congressman
SMITH would have probably had his watch on Eastern Daylight Time
for Washington, D.C.

[redacted] left the damaged watch with [redacted] for
appropriate disposal and/or return to [redacted]
[redacted]

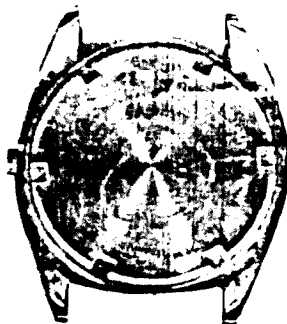
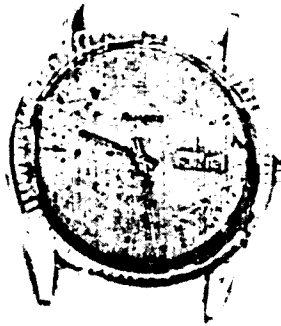
b6
b7C

A copy of the front and back of the aforementioned
watch, bearing serial number 643521, is attached hereto:

Investigation on 10/12/89 at Gulfport, Mississippi File # 149A-JN-17714 **9**
by SA [redacted] Date dictated 10/16/89

b6
b7C

Found around Sept. 23, 1989
ON Saturday
Hands have moved off of 10:37



Memorandum



To : SAC, JACKSON (149A-JN-17714) (P)

Date 10/17/89

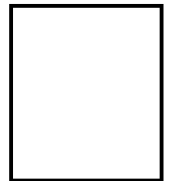
From : SA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C

Subject: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE
CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS, 5TH CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICT, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI,
8/13/89

Attached hereto is the NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
BOARD Preliminary Report regarding captioned crash provided to SA
[REDACTED] Crash Investigator.

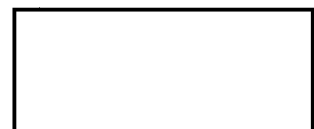
2 - Jackson (1 Attachment)



149-JN-17714-10



b6
b7C



Memorandum



To : SAC, JACKSON (149A-JN-17714) (P)

Date 10/17/89

From : SA [redacted]

b6
b7C

Subject: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE
CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS, 5TH CONGRESIONAL
DISTRICT, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI,
8/13/89

On 9/6/89, no Mississippi drivers license could be
located for [redacted]

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b7C

On 9/6/89, [redacted]
[redacted], New Orleans, Louisiana, was unable to locate any
for [redacted]

b6
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b7E

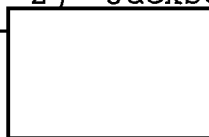
On 10/2/89, [redacted]
[redacted] telephone number [redacted] was unable to locate any
[redacted] stated the [redacted]
[redacted], which is similar to the name JOE SMITH in America, would
not be identifiable without more specific data. [redacted] could not
find any [redacted]

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b7C
b7E

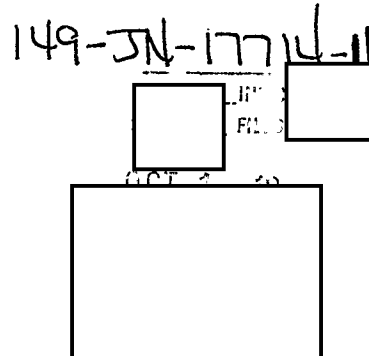
On 10/12/89, PLA [redacted] was requested to determine if
toll records can be obtained under the Electronic Communications
Act which would allow access to the telephone number used to
originate the anonymous call to the New Orleans Office of the FBI
regarding captioned matter on 8/24/89, at 1:45 a.m.

b6
b7C

2 - Jackson



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b7C



FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☒ AIRTEL

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☐ UNCLAS

Date 12/5/89

1 TO : SAC, NEW ORLEANS (149A-JN-17714)
 2 FROM : SAC, JACKSON (149A-JN-17714) (P)
 3 SUBJECT: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE
 4 CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
 5 MEMBER OF CONGRESS, FIFTH
 6 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,
 7 STATE OF MISSISSIPPI,
 8 8/13/89
 9 OO: JACKSON

Enclosed for New Orleans is a certified copy of a
 sealed court order [redacted]
 [redacted]

LEAD:NEW ORLEANS DIVISIONAT NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

OTHER SEALED

JACKSON DIVISIONAT JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

Serve a certified copy of the enclosed sealed court
 order on [redacted]
 [redacted]

2 - New Orleans (Encs. 1)
 ② - Jackson

149A-JN-17714-12

Search [redacted]
 Serializ [redacted]

b6
 b7C

Jackson
Lead

Approved: [redacted] Transmitted

(Number) (Time)

Per [redacted]

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Probe may not pinpoint pilot's condition at time of crash

By ANITA LEE
STAFF WRITER

■ A final report on the cause of a plane crash that killed 5th District Rep. Larkin Smith and pilot Chuck Vierling probably will be out no sooner than mid-February.

Even when tests are completed, investigators may be unable to determine whether Vierling was ill or dead when the plane crashed Aug. 13 in the DeSoto National Forest, said Perry County Coroner Randall B. Carnahan.

"The body was torn up so bad, there wasn't anything there as far as vital organs that would do any good" Carnahan said. "It's not looking good, as far as being able to tell whether or not (Vierling) was alive at the time of the accident."

Federal aviation investigators have ruled out weather, mechanical failure, or drug or alcohol impairment as causes of the crash. The airplane was about 10 miles off course when it sheared off the top of a pine tree and crashed in a heavily wooded area of the forest about 13 miles south of New Augusta.

Jeff Kennedy, an air safety investigator based in the Miami field office of the National Transportation Safety Board, said he hopes to have his report on the crash by mid-February. Kennedy will present his findings to the five-member National Transportation Safety Board, which will then determine the cause of the crash.

Carnahan said he had been told initially that the investigation would take from six weeks to six months.

The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, an agency of the Department of Defense is reviewing some test results and testing specimens from both victims in its toxicology laboratory, Kennedy said.

Said Carnahan, "I had made a ruling of accidental, pending the investigation of all the agencies together. So we're just going to have to wait until we get everything together and see what we've got."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

THE SUN-HERALD
GULFPORT-BILOXI, MS

Date: 12/8/89
Edition: MORNING

Title:

Character: 149A-JN-17714

Classification:

Submitting Office:
JACKSON

Indexing:

149A-JN-17714-13

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
DEC 12 1989	

b6
b7c

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

- ☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☒ AIRTEL

PRECEDENCE:

- ☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

- ☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☐ UNCLAS

Date DEC. 27, 1989

1 To : SAC, JACKSON (149AJN17714)
2 From : SAC, NEW ORLEANS (149AJNR17714) - RUC -
3 Subject: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE CRASH
4 INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH, MEMBER OF
5 CONGRESS, FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,
6 STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 13, 1989
7 OO - Jackson

Reurairtel December 5, 1989.

8 On December 14, 1989, the certified copy of a sealed
9 court order [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]

15 2 - Jackson
16 1 - New Orleans
17 [REDACTED]
18 (3)

149A-JN-17714-14

SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 2 1990	

[REDACTED]

OTHER
SEALEDb6
b7c

Approved: [Signature]

Transmitted

(Number)

(Time)

Per

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

1989: A year when it was seldom politics as usual

THE SUN-HERALD
GULFPORT-BILOXI, MS
Date: 12/30/89
Edition: MORNING

Title:

Character:
or 149A-JN-17714-15

Classification:
Submitting Office:

JACKSON

Indexing:

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 8 1990	
FBI - JACKSON	

b6
b7c

Coast's top story: Rep. Smith's death

By ANITA LEE
STAFF WRITER

■ The death of freshman Congressman Larkin Smith and the heated campaign to succeed him head The Sun Herald's list of top news stories for 1989.

Chosen second by The Sun Herald staff was the ongoing investigation into the deaths of Judge Vincent Sherry and his wife, Margaret. During the year, an inmate claimed that Mayor Pete Halat helped plot their murders and that the deaths were linked to an extortion ring. The downfall of District Attorney Glenn

Cannon was selected as the third top story, while the the anti-climatic federal trial of former Biloxi Mayor Gerald Blessey and ex-economic development official Reba Capers ranked fourth.

Rounding out the top five was the arrival and departure of the cruise-gambling ship Pride of Mississippi.

The other top stories, in order, were:
▶ Alleged abuse of Harrison County inmates.

▶ The turtle excluder device battle that wouldn't go away.

▶ The impeachment of federal judge Walter L. Nixon Jr.

▶ Gulfport's basketball whiz, Chris Jackson.

▶ The proposed federal land swap at Camp Shelby.

Smith dies; Taylor wins seat

Political savvy and a loyal following cultivated as Harrison County sheriff propelled Larkin Smith of Long Beach into a promising career as a Republican congressman. Smith, 45, began his first term with ambitious ideas for fighting the war on drugs, by pushing to fund the Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant in Hancock County and by landing choice committee assignments.

Smith was home from Washington during a congressional recess when he flew to Hattiesburg on Aug. 13 to speak at opening ceremonies for the Dixie Youth Baseball World Series. Smith and pilot Chuck Vierling, 58, were heading back to the Coast when their single-engine plane crashed in the piney woods of the DeSoto National Forest. Their bodies were found the next morning.

The cause of the crash is still under investigation, with results expected in February.

Smith's widow, Sheila, said that she might run for the seat, as did other Coast Republicans. But all Republican competition backed off when U.S. Sen. Trent Lott endorsed Tom Anderson, Lott's chief of staff, in the special election. On the Democratic side, state Sen. Gene Taylor and Attorney General Mike Moore entered the fray.

But Moore finished a distant third behind Taylor and Anderson. Even a presidential visit to the Coast couldn't pull out the race for Anderson. Taylor stomped Anderson in the October runoff with 65 percent of the vote to Anderson's 35 percent.

Halat denies murder allegations

A Louisiana inmate stunned the Coast in August by claiming in an interview with a Jackson television station that Biloxi Mayor Pete Halat helped plot the murder of Halat's closest friend, Circuit Judge Vincent Sherry and Sherry's wife, former Biloxi Councilwoman Margaret Sherry.

conference to deny any involvement in the murders.

The investigation had stalled until Lynne Sposito, the Sherry's eldest daughter, hired a private investigator.

Revelations about Halat and a group of Dixie Mafia criminals allegedly linked to the murders have continued to surface since August.

Evidence mounted that an inmate extortion scam at Angola prison in Louisiana might be linked to the September 1987 slayings.

Angola inmate Bobby Joe Fabian claimed that prisoners involved in the scam wanted Vincent Sherry dead because he was suspected of taking \$400,000 that the inmates had bilked from homosexuals in the extortion scam.

John E. Ransom of Georgia, a reputed member of the Dixie Mafia, surfaced as the suspected trigger man in the murders, but he has never been charged with the crime. Ransom is facing charges of murdering a Georgia man.

Another alleged Dixie Mafia figure, Kirksey McCord Nix Jr., is suspected of leading the extortion scam and planning the Sherry murders. Nix and his wife, Kellye Dawn Nix, were indicted by a Louisiana grand jury in September on charges stemming from the extortion scam.

A federal grand jury believed to be investigating the Sherry murders is scheduled to meet again in January.

Cannon admits fraud

District Attorney Glenn Cannon abruptly pleaded guilty in February to bankruptcy fraud, after being indicted in December 1983 by a federal grand jury.

U.S. District Judge Walter Gex III sentenced Cannon to three months in a Salvation Army halfway house in Pensacola, Fla. Cannon has completed the sentence.

He was permanently disbarred from practicing law.

Cannon pleaded guilty to concealing \$12,099.50 from bankruptcy officials investigating Gulfport businessman Jerry Lampley, who conned investors in an oil and gas scam.

Loyal supporters stood by Cannon during his trial, but tape recorded evidence against him proved overwhelming. Cannon changed his plea from not guilty to guilty on the fifth day of his trial.

Cannon resigned his office May 3 as district attorney for Harrison, Hancock and Stone counties.

port attorney Joe Meadows to serve as interim district attorney. Meadows got his marks from the legal and law enforcement communities for clearing a backlog of cases and straightening out the district attorney's office.

In November, Biloxi attorney Cono Caranna won a special election and was sworn in as district attorney.

Ironically, Cannon in 1987 had defeated incumbent Caranna for the district attorney's job.

These days, Cannon is keeping a low profile, said his friend, the Rev. Garlon L. Pemberton. Cannon failed to return a phone call to his Gulfport home.

"He's asked me to make no comment at all," Pemberton said recently. "He's doing well. He's just kind of out of circulation as far as I know. He's just kind of down in the dumps."

Point Cadet trial ends with whimper

Before he left office in June, former Biloxi Mayor Gerald Blessey was indicted on extortion, conspiracy and mail fraud charges that stemmed from an FBI investigation.

Charges against Blessey and former economic development official Reba Capers involved the mayor's pet project, a waterfront development at Point Cadet. After a tedious four-week trial in August, a federal jury was unable to decide if Blessey and Capers had committed the crimes.

Capers and Blessey are accused of conspiring to defraud the federal government of \$160,000 so they could pay bond closing costs for a hotel project at Point Cadet. After the jury failed to reach a verdict, U.S. Attorney George Phillips vowed to try the case again, but it has not been set for retrial.

Meanwhile, Blessey is scheduled to go on trial Jan. 31 for extortion, conspiracy to commit extortion and attempted extortion. Blessey and his former law partner, Mike Cavanaugh, are charged with conspiring to extort legal fees from the former city law firm Page, Mannino and Peresich. Cavanaugh allegedly received 25 percent of the fees that the city law firm was paid for working on bond issues between 1982 and 1987.

Since leaving office, Blessey has returned to private law practice.

Pride comes and goes

The Pride of Mississippi casino cruise ship sailed in and out of the lives of Coastians, leaving a wake of debt.

Port of Gulfport in February, but the owners still threatened shortly afterward to move to potentially more profitable waters in Texas. The move was off and on, off again and on again, until the ship finally cruised away in November to Galveston, Texas, sinking hopes of a permanent new tourist attraction.

Pride Cruise Lines Ltd., the corporation that owns the ship, still maintains an office in Gulfport and has promised to bring in another ship by March.

The company left behind more than \$1.3 million in debt owed to People's Bank of Biloxi and Coast vendors. The State Tax Commission also is demanding that the company pay a \$1 million use tax for the time that the ship operated out of Gulfport.

Pride Cruise Lines filed bankruptcy earlier this month in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Biloxi. Company officials say that they plan to fight the Tax Commission levy through the bankruptcy suit.

Meanwhile, a new gambling ship, the LA. Cruise, has set up shop in Biloxi.

Inmate abuse claims dismissed

A Harrison County grand jury in October investigated four deputies' claims that county Sheriff's Department jailers were beating juvenile offenders at the Youth Detention Center and inmates at the county jail in Gulfport.

Acting Sheriff Farley Rhodes promptly fired the deputies for telling the story to the news media. But the deputies insisted that the Sheriff's Department had been unwilling to address the problems.

In investigating the abuse claims, a grand jury questioned about 40 witnesses. In the end, the grand jury indicted two sheriff's employees who had criticized the administration.

Indicted for aggravated assault were former Deputy Boyce Grayson, one of the four who spoke out about the abuse, and former jail Sgt. Robert Peralta, who blew the whistle on an unauthorized inmate catering service run by the Sheriff's Department.

The grand jury also offered suggestions for improvements at the Youth Detention Center.

Since the grand jury wrapped up its investigation, the FBI and at least three civil liberties groups have been looking into the abuse allegations. The American Civil Liberties Union is continuing to press a lawsuit against the Sheriff's Department on behalf of the four fired deputies. The ACLU claims that the deputies were fired for exercising their rights of freedom of speech.

The allegations of abuse surfaced during a heated sheriff's race with supporters of Chief Deputy Joe Price crying that the charges were political. Price went on to hammer four other candidates and win the job without a runoff.

TEDs give shrimpers the blues

After years of legal battles, shrimpers were forced to use Turtle Excluder Devices in their nets.

This summer, shrimpers blockaded Galveston harbor and convinced the U.S. Department of Commerce to suspend the hated regulations. An en-

vironmentalist group successfully sued to force the TED regulations back into effect.

Shrimpers say they kill fewer turtles than poachers, pollution and environmental factors. Using the TEDs could put shrimpers out of business, because the device allows 10 to 30 percent of the shrimp to escape through a trap door that ejects endangered sea turtles. However, few shrimpers can afford to disobey the regulations, which carries fines of up to \$20,000.

Shrimpers plan more legal battles to repeal the TED regulations, but environmentalists — who outnumber shrimpers 100 to one — are likely to keep the laws in effect.

Judge Nixon impeached

Walter Nixon of Ocean Springs doggedly fought a perjury conviction for 3½ years, but in November he finally lost his livelihood as a federal judge and his license to practice law.

The Senate voted 89-8 to remove the chief judge of the Southern District from the bench. Nixon, who was convicted in February 1986 on two counts of perjury, became the seventh judge to be removed from office through impeachment.

The state Supreme Court ordered Nixon disbursed on Nov. 22, one day after he was released from a New Orleans halfway house after serving 20 months of a five-year sentence.

Nixon had been convicted of lying to a federal grand jury when he said that he did not discuss a marijuana smuggling case with a Forrest County prosecutor. The case involved the son of Wiley Fairchild of Hattiesburg, who had given Nixon mineral rights in oil and gas wells.

Jackson dribbles to fame

Chris Jackson of Gulfport, whose talents are no secret to Mississippi high school basketball fans, became an overnight success on the national scene as a freshman at Louisiana State University.

The 19-year-old Mississippian be-

came the most proficient freshman scorer in college basketball history by averaging better than 30 points per game for the Tigers of coach Dale Brown.

Twice named the most valuable player in Mississippi high school basketball while leading the Gulfport Admirals to consecutive state championships, Jackson caught the nation's eye last December.

With a number of 50-point-plus scoring efforts during the campaign, Jackson was named to several All-America teams, was player of the year in the Southeastern Conference and was featured on the cover of several national publications.

Camp Shelby land swap

Environmentalists and outdoorsmen put up their dukes when the U.S. Army announced a plan to swap 16,000 acres of Colorado grasslands for 32,000 acres of the DeSoto National Forest.

But Mississippi's congressional delegation views the swap as an economic boon for South Mississippi.

The Army wants the U.S. Forest Service land for tank maneuvers at Camp Shelby, an Army National Guard training base. With the land, the Army says that it could increase the number of troops training at Camp Shelby, which would trickle into the area economy through more jobs and sales.

Without the land, the Army says that training will be cut back and moved to sites with more room.

The Sierra Club and Citizens Against the Land Swap claim that the Army has inflated the potential benefits and downplayed the possible losses.

Public access to the land would be drastically cut, 10 counties would lose a percentage of timber revenues from the Forest Service and timber jobs would be lost, the groups have pointed out.

Associate Sports Editor Dick Lightsey and Staff Writer Patrick Peterson contributed to this story.

SUN HERALD GRAPHIC

COAST

1. Freshman U.S. Rep. Larkin Smith of Long Beach dies in a plane crash.
2. New allegations are made in the investigation into the Sherry slayings.
3. District Attorney Glenn Cannon pleads guilty to fraud, leaves office.
4. Former Biloxi Mayor Gerald Blessey and former economic development director Reba Capers go on trial.
5. The Pride of Mississippi comes and goes.
6. Deputies allege abuse of inmates at the Harrison County jail.
7. Shrimpers' government battle over the use of turtle excluder devices.
8. Federal Judge Walter L. Nixon Jr. is impeached.
9. Gulfport's basketball whiz, Chris Jackson, shines at LSU.
10. A land swap involving Camp Shelby is proposed.

selected by Sun Herald staff

STATE

1. Gov. Ray Mabus offers his BEST program, a proposed overhaul of the state's educational system.
2. Freshman U.S. Rep. Larkin Smith dies in a plane crash.
3. State's three charity hospitals are forced to close.
4. Scandals hit the state's Highway, Public Service commissions.
5. Federal Judge Walter L. Nixon Jr. is impeached.
6. New allegations crop up in the investigation into the slayings of Judge Vincent Sherry and his wife.
7. Ole Miss football player Roy Lee "Chucky" Mullins suffers a paralyzing injury during a game.
8. NASA picks Yellow Creek for a solid rocket motor plant.
9. Moves begin to reopen 1963 Medgar Evers murder case.
10. February ice storm pounds Central Mississippi.

selected by Associated Press

NATION/WORLD

1. Communism crumbles in Eastern Europe and Gorbachev leads the Soviet Union toward a freer society.
2. A student-led pro-democracy movement in China is crushed by troops.
3. The Exxon Valdez oil spill spoils hundreds of miles of Alaskan coastline.
4. An earthquake batters the San Francisco Bay area.
5. The abortion debate shifts to state legislatures and state elections.
6. The international drug war.
7. Hurricane Hugo pounds the Caribbean and the Southeast coast.
8. Scandals, trials and resignations shake confidence in the federal government.
9. The federal government moves to rescue savings and loans.
10. Lt. Col. Oliver North is convicted and the Iran-Contra investigation grinds on.

selected by Associated Press

Memorandum



To : SAC, JACKSON (149A-JN-17714) (P)

Date 4/20/90

From : SA [REDACTED]

b6
b7C

Subject: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE
CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS,
FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
AUGUST 13, 1989

On 4/19/90, [REDACTED] Crash Investigator, NATIONAL
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB), Miami, Florida, telephone
[REDACTED] telephonically provided the following
information:

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His final factual report regarding above captioned
airplane crash is due to be forwarded to his Washington office in
approximately three weeks. He stated his review of all evidence
concerning captioned matter leads him to believe there were no
mechanical problems associated with the aircraft. He further
advised the descending turn completed by the aircraft just prior
to the crash is a "textbook example" of a pilot suffering from
spatial disorientation.

On 4/19/90, [REDACTED] Public Affairs Office,
NTSB, Washington, D.C., telephone [REDACTED] stated she
would forward, upon completion, the NTSB Investigator's Factual
Report and the report concerning the NTSB Official Determination
of Cause regarding captioned crash.

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② Jackson



149A-JN-17714-17

SEARCHED	INDEXED.....
SERIALIZED	FILED.....
APR 23 1990	
JACKSON	

Memorandum



To : SAC, JACKSON (149A-JN-17714) (P)

Date 6/29/90

From : SA

b6
b7C

Subject: INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE
CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS,
FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
AUGUST 13, 1989

On 6/28/90, the NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB) issued its Official Determination of Cause Finding for the crash.

The cause was shown to be pilot error related to a non-instrument-rated pilot trying to fly under instrument meteorological conditions.

A copy of the finding and the related NTSB factual report has been requested from the NTSB, Washington, D.C., for FBI files.

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b7C

2 - Jackson



149A-JN-17714-18

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	

JUL 3 - 1990



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)
 THE SUN-HERALD
 GULFPORT-BILOXI, MS

Date: 6/29/90
 Edition: MORNING

Title:

Character: 149A-JN-17714
 or
 Classification:
 Submitting: JACKSON

Indexing:

b6
 b7C

NTSB faults pilot in Smith crash

Board says haze, lack of training were fatal combination

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

■ Pilot error has been ruled the cause of the airplane crash that killed U.S. Rep. Larkin Smith and Gulfport pilot Chuck Vierling as the two flew to the Coast from Hattiesburg on a hazy night last August.

In a final report released Thursday,

the five-member National Transportation Safety Board ruled that the crash probably was caused by Vierling's lack of instrument training and the hazy conditions that reduced visibility to one to two miles.

The report states the probable cause as "the in-flight loss of control by the non-instrument-rated pilot af-

ter encountering instrument meteorological conditions."

Vierling, 58, and Smith, 45, a freshman congressman and former Harrison County sheriff, died about 9:30 p.m. on Aug. 13 when their small plane crashed into a densely wooded area of the DeSoto National Forest, about 34 miles north of

Gulfport.

The two men were returning from Hattiesburg, where Smith had thrown out the first pitch in the Dixie Youth Baseball World Series.

Vierling, a retired FAA electronics engineer, had indicated that he planned to follow U.S. 49 — the established route to the Coast from Hattiesburg. However, after leaving the airport in Hattiesburg, Vierling

veered to the east until his course was corrected by an air traffic controller. The plane crashed about 10 miles from U.S. 49.

Despite a massive search, haze over the forest prevented anyone from finding the airplane wreckage until shortly after daybreak.

Vierling had logged 1,000 to 1,200 flight hours and had performed well on his last in-flight test. However,

investigators said his night-flying experience could not be determined from records.

In the report, investigators also determined that several of the 16-year-old plane's instruments had not been inspected according to Federal Aviation Administration guidelines for use under flight rules. The plane was not

transmitting location and altitude information, which would have pinpointed the plane for air traffic controllers.

The report said that Vierling first complained of poor visibility during a flight from the Coast earlier in the evening. He told the airport operator

that he "did not care to make the flight," the report said.

Toxicology reports showed that neither Vierling nor Smith had traces of any drugs or alcohol in their blood and that carbon monoxide levels in their blood was normal.

A pilot who had flown near the crash site that evening said the haze had reduced visibility to less than one mile. The pilot said that as dark descends on DeSoto National Forest, pilots have been known to experience problems because of darkness and the

absence of ground lights.

Vierling told the air controller in McComb that "we're on the wrong heading here" about 10 minutes before radar contact with the plane was lost.

Witnesses near the crash site told investigators that the plane's engine roared as if it had been pushed to full throttle for about five seconds before the crash.

■ Staff Writer Patrick Peterson contributed to this report.

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☒ AIRTEL

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☐ UNCLAS

Date 90

b6
b7C

1 TO : DIRECTOR, FBI
 2 FROM : SAC, JACKSON (149A-JN-17714) (C)
 3 SUBJECT : INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE
 4 CRASH INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
 5 MEMBER OF CONGRESS, FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL
 6 DISTRICT, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
 7 DAMV
 8 OO: JACKSON

9 Re Jackson teletype to the Bureau, 8/14/89.

10 Limited investigation in this matter developed no
 11 credible evidence to in any way substantiate widespread rumors
 12 that some unknown act of sabotage was responsible for
 13 captioned crash. To the contrary, investigation substantially
 14 reflects the crash was caused by pilot error.

15 Reports of autopsy concerning both Congressman
 16 SMITH and pilot CHARLES VIERLING, as well as the NATIONAL
 17 TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB) Preliminary Aviation
 18 Report, were obtained in 10/89, and are on file in the Jackson
 19 Office.

20 In addition, on 7/9/90, following their release by
 21 the NTSB, Washington, D.C., in 6/90, copies of the NTSB
 Factual Report consisting of 352 pages, and the NTSB Official
 Determination of Cause Finding consisting of two pages, were
 placed in this file in the Jackson Office.

2 Bureau
 1 Jackson

(3)

149A-JN-17714-20

Searched
 Serialized
 Indexed
 Filed

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b7C

Approved: _____

Transmitted _____

(Number) (Time)

Per _____

149A-JN-17714

The NTSB determined the probable cause of the accident was: "The in-flight loss of control by the non-instrument rated pilot after encountering instrument meteorological conditions, resulting in the airplane spiraling into a wooded area."

Regular telephonic contact was maintained between the Jackson Division and the NTSB principle crash investigator involved in this matter, [redacted] of the NTSB's Miami Office. Investigator [redacted] has advised SA [redacted] of the Jackson Division, Gulfport Resident Agency, that the descending turn completed by the aircraft just prior to the crash is a "textbook example" of a pilot suffering from spatial disorientation.

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For the information of the Bureau, it is believed family members of Congressman SMITH and pilot VIERLING are considering filing a lawsuit against CESSNA AIRCRAFT and possibly other related companies alleging design flaws in the aircraft contributed to captioned crash. The basis for this suit appears to be [redacted]
[redacted]

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In view of the above, this matter is being placed in a closed status.

149A-JN-17714-21

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 25 1991	
ACKS	

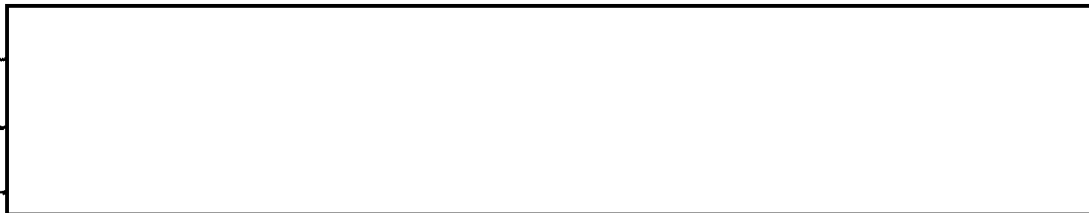
b6
b7C

CASE NO. _____ CRIME/INCIDENT _____

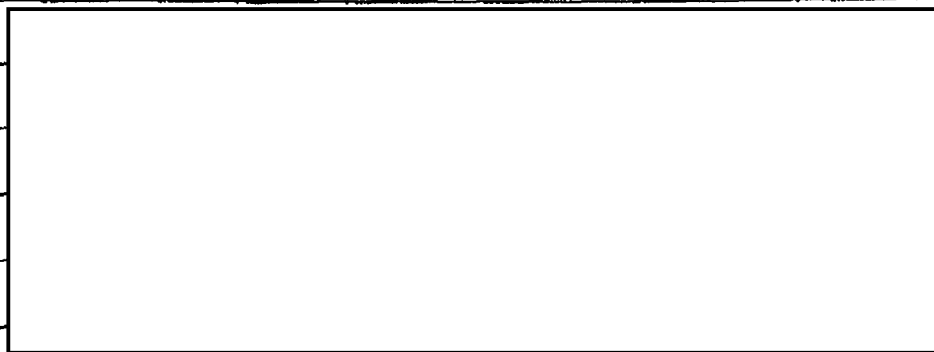
VICTIM _____ DATE & TIME OF REPORT 2-17-91 0950

TYPE OF REPORT: ☐ ORIGINAL (CONTINUATION) ☐ CLEARANCE ☐ SUPPLEMENTAL ☐ SUSPENSION

MENTIONED



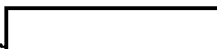
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b7C



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b7C

F. B. I.

PORTLAND, OREGON



b6
b7C



FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI



SMITH, LARKIN

N. F. D.

Reporting Officer



Approved by

b6
b7C

CASE NO. _____ CRIME/INCIDENT _____

VICTIM _____

DATE & TIME OF REPORT _____

TYPE OF REPORT: ☐ ORIGINAL (CONTINUATION) ☐ CLEARANCE ☐ SUPPLEMENTAL ☐ SUSPENSIONINVESTIGATION

ON 2-16-91 AT 1500 hrs., I RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM DEPUTY [REDACTED] AT THE KLAMATH COUNTY JAIL. [REDACTED] TOLD ME A NOTE FROM [REDACTED] HAD BEEN FOUND DETAILING CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING AN AIRPLANE CRASH THAT KILLED CONGRESSMAN LARKIN SMITH.

b6
b7C

ON 2-17-91 AT 0910 hrs., I INTERVIEWED [REDACTED] [REDACTED] AT THE KLAMATH COUNTY JAIL, SEE STATEMENTS.

b6
b7C

ON 2-17-91 AT 0950 hrs., I SPOKE WITH [REDACTED] AT THE F.A.A. TOWER IN GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI. [REDACTED] TOLD ME SMITH'S PLANE DID CRASH AND WOULD HAVE SOMEONE CALL ME BACK. THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD IS REVIEWING THE INCIDENT.

Reporting Officer [REDACTED]

Approved by _____

Status: _____

[REDACTED]

b6
b7C

KLAMATH COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Page _____ of _____ Pages

CASE NO _____

CRIME/INCIDENT _____

VICTIM _____

DATE & TIME OF REPORT _____

TYPE OF REPORT: ☐ ORIGINAL (CONTINUATION) ☐ CLEARANCE ☐ SUPPLEMENTAL ☐ SUSPENSION

[REDACTED] SAID INSUBSTANCE A MAN [REDACTED]

b6
b7C

[REDACTED] TOLD HIM AT THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN YARD
IN KLAMATH FALLS, A BOMB HAD BEEN PLACED ON THE
AIRPLANE THAT CRASHED KILLING CONGRESSMAN LARKIN SMITH
AND HIS PILOT NEAR GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI.

[REDACTED] TOLD HIM THIS WAS ENGINEERED BY THE
[REDACTED]

b6
b7C

SMITH.

[REDACTED] HAD DONE TIME IN THE PARLMAN STATE PEN IN
MISSISSIPPI FOR MURDER. DURING HIS TIME OF IMPRISONMENT
THERE WERE [REDACTED] IN
PRISON WITH HIM. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

b6
b7C

Reporting Officer [REDACTED]

Approved by _____

Status:

☐ Closed By Arrest

☐ Unfounded

☐ Null

☐ Closed - Pending

☐ Suspended

☐ Other

b6
b7C

TIME 09:50pm

OFFICER'S REPORT
OREGON STATE POLICE

No.

Place SP-K. Falls

County Klamath

Subject F.I.'s

February 17, 1991

Deputy

b6
b7C

In regards to your call, the below listed subjects were all identified as those who were with just prior to his arrest for Trespass II at the Burlington Northern Railyard on 02-15-91.

b6
b7C

Tpr.
SP-K. Falls
ph# 883-5711

FBI

TRANSMIT VIA:

☐ Teletype
☐ Facsimile
☒ AIRTEL

PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate
☐ Priority
☐ Routine

CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET
☐ SECRET
☐ CONFIDENTIAL
☐ UNCLAS E F T O
☐ UNCLAS

Date 2/19/91

1 TO : SAC, JACKSON (149A-JN-17714)
2 FROM [] SAC, PORTLAND (149A-JN-17714) (RUC)
3 SUBJECT : INFORMATION CONCERNING AIRPLANE CRASH
4 INVOLVING LARKIN I. SMITH,
5 MEMBER OF CONGRESS, 5th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT,
6 STATE OF MISSISSIPPI;
7 DAMV
8 OO: JACKSON

9 Re telephone call of SA [] Medford,
10 Oregon RA to SA [] Gulfport, Mississippi RA, 2/19/91.

11 Enclosed for Jackson is one copy of a self-
12 explanatory Klamath County Sheriff's Office police report.

13 For information of Jackson, on 2/19/91 Detective
14 [] Klamath County Interagency Drug Team, Klamath
15 Falls, Oregon advised that on 2/17/91 Deputy [] Klamath
16 Co Sheriff's Office was contacted by []
17 [] who was lodged at the Jackson Co. Jail.
18 Thereafter Deputy [] prepared the enclosed police
19 report regarding the information received from []
20 Detective [] said that [] mentioned in the
21 enclosed police report may be []
[] who also has a Florida CCH of 60 pages.

22 On 2/19/91 Area Supervisor [] FAA,
23 Gulfport, Mississippi, [] advised that he had been
24 contacted by the Klamath Co. Sheriff's Office concerning the
25 same enclosed information, and he in turn had notified the
26 NTSB.

27 Investigation being left to discretion of Jackson.

28 ③ - Jackson (149A-JN-17714) (encl. 1)
29 1 - Portland (149A-JN-17714)
30 []

149A-JN-17714-22
SEARCHED [] INDEXED []
SERIAL [] FILED []

FEB 25 1991

Approved: _____

Transmitted _____
(Number)